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Labour *v.* The Jury

Civil liberties, never very safe in Tory clutches, are positively imperilled whenever entrusted to Labour lawyers. The mentality which has recently sought to prosecute pacifists, suppress the Crossman *Diaries*, and arrest journalists under a law aimed at foreign spies, has now approved the substantial destruction of a most fundamental right of all defendants in criminal cases. That right – to challenge up to seven members of the jury panel – has suddenly been reduced to three, without any public debate or expert scrutiny, but merely on the strength of anecdotes by a few idiosyncratic barrister MPs during the Committee stage of the Criminal Law Bill.

Until 1948 defendants on serious charges were entitled to challenge as many as 35 jurors. An Act of that year settled the number of challenges at seven. For the next two decades, there was no criticism of this right – age and property qualifications ensured that jurors were predominantly 'male, middle-aged, middle-minded and middle-class': the kind of people who could, despite challenges, be relied upon to convict pacifist demonstrators (Weathersfield 1964) and rebellious publishers (*I.T. and Oz*, 1970-71). But in 1972 property qualifications were abolished, and the age limit for jury service was reduced to 18, thereby permitting what the Conservative spokesman on Home Affairs described last week as 'a layabout lot of unemployed males' to serve on the sort of juries which acquitted pacifists, (the BWNIC 14, 1975) and rebellious publishers (*Nasty Tales*, 1973 *Time Out*, 1975 and *Linda Lovelace*, 1976).

The Conservatives had first felt the pinch in July 1973, when a jury at Mold Crown Court threw out the first conspiracy case against flying pickets. There had been a number of defence challenges, apparently made to get trade unionists on to the jury. After that acquittal, Lord Hailsham unilaterally abolished the defence right to know the occupations of prospective jurors; and this 'reform' took effect just in time to cover the case of the Shrewsbury 'Six'. Lord Hailsham justified his action on the ground that the right of challenge was being 'abused by the defence'. For 'abused' read 'exercised': right-wing politicians never understand the law when it is not on their side. As it happens, this particular law was eminently sensible. Anyone, it is said, has the right to be judged by a representative selection of his peers. Yet the first 12 jurors 'summoned to the book to be sworn' may be a wholly unrepresentative group of people. No Gallup pollster would be content with an arbitrary sample of 12 and the right to challenge seven allows only for very rudimentary cross-sampling. In most criminal cases challenges are not used at all. But in cases involving life-style or conscience they are a vital safeguard.

That fact entirely escaped the Labour lawyers on the Criminal Law Bill Committee. Indeed, what is so disgraceful about this latest 'reform' is that it has been achieved without the slightest public debate, and without any kind of expert examination of the issues involved. Gossip from a handful of barrister MPs has succeeded in dismantling a right which two major investigations – Lord Morris's Royal Commission on Jury Service and the James Committee on Distribution of Court Business – had in no way criticised. A Royal Commission on criminal procedure was established a few months ago: why did the Government act on uninformed prejudice instead of asking the Commission to receive submissions and make recommendations?

The criminal trial is not an institution which should be trifled with to accommodate the whims of a few barristers who dislike their clients. The trial process has its own delicate balance. It should not be lightly interfered with, least of all by a party which professes concern with civil liberties. But the Labour Party these days has difficulty discerning a civil liberty when it trips up on one. Labour lawyers, in particular, tend to confine themselves to calling for more legal aid, a demand which might provide more justice for the poor but one which also would certainly provide more money for Labour lawyers. Otherwise, their parliamentary performance is dismal. It may simply be that they are not a match for Conservative lawyers. Sometimes, though, it looks as if they are playing on the same side.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

A Sanctimonious Mob

Has the dignity, the majesty, the solemnity, the reputation, the respectability, the grandeur, the humanity, the nobility of the House of Commons been preserved by Tuesday night's vote on the Select Committee report? Do we, as a result of the decision merely to 'take note', feel happier with our legislature? Are we to congratulate ourselves on the outcome? Michael Foot, presumably, must think not, since he sat through the whole debate without being convinced that the report had done any injustice to the two Members in question. He thought that the House should approve the report but do nothing about it. To go further, to demand suspension or expulsion, would be to behave like a mob, and there was nothing more objectionable than a sanctimonious mob. Yet it was Foot's opening speech, after Reginald Maudling and Albert Roberts had temporarily withdrawn, which set the tone for the sanctimony to follow. There is a sanctimony in harsh judgments. There is also a sanctimonious clemency. 'To err is human, to forgive divine. *You* have erred, Albert Roberts; *we* forgive you.' How appropriate it was that, despite the efforts of Foot to wind the debate up at 9.30, the last words were seized by Patrick Cormack – whose middle name is Sanctimony.

And how galling the whole occasion was from the point of view of the press. For the press has enjoyed none of the freedom of the Select Committee or the House itself in its own investigations of the Poulson affair. The writs have been numerous: some of them were merely threatened (in public and in private); some of them were successful; some are still unresolved. 'If our colleagues have erred in any judgment,' said Sanctimony Cormack, 'they have sufferred more than enough from the publicity following the report and during previous years when their names were constantly in the headlines.' I deeply sympathise with their plight, but I cannot help thinking also of the plight of those who tried to unravel the true story of Poulson and his Westminster associates. John Cordle, earlier this year, used a public threat of legal action against the *Observer* to protect himself from those headlines. Until last Friday he was fighting tooth and nail against the conclusions of the report, which was formally agreed (in so far as it related to Cordle) by the House on Tuesday night. On Friday he accepted defeat, and on Tuesday Francis Pym was calling for sympathy and respect for Mr John Cordle. Such is the power of sanctimony in making men forget. One might rephrase Milton:

'Tis sanctimony, my brother, sanctimony:
He that hath that is clad in compleat steel
And like a quiver'd Nymph with Arrows keen
May trace huge Forests and unharbour'd
Heaths,
Infamous Hills, and sandy perilous wildes . . .

It was indeed the unharbour'd Heath, as the papers have reported, who threw the lifeline to Maudling, 12 years, almost to the day, after they had contested for the leadership of the Tory Party. But the effectiveness of his speech derived, not from its movingness as a gesture of friendship (it was not a very friendly speech), nor from its warmth (it was not warm); the motivating force of the speech was *amour propre* – if Maudling's resignation letter had been less than frank, Heath would have been less than frank in accepting it at face value and reading a portion of it to the House. For Heath, to save Maudling was to stand by his record as Prime Minister, a record he has never had the modesty to question, just as Maudling has never been able to see that there might be two views about his method in combining politics and business. No, Heath was not being warm and friendly – but he was effective. He changed the course of the debate. And he did so simply because he seemed to be able to provide the loophole that the majority of Members wanted. Heath's strictures on Michael Stewart did not go unanswered in the debate. But the answers to Heath went unheard. The Tories had made up their minds, and most of them had left the Chamber.

The case against Maudling over the resignation letter was as follows. Maudling had written his letter for publication and to be read, in part, to the House, by Heath. In the course of the letter he said that he had become 'Chairman of an export company, for which post I took no remuneration' and that Poulson had made a covenant 'in favour of a charitable appeal which had my support'. The Select Committee, as Heath triumphantly pointed out, had found that the letter 'contains nothing that is untrue'; however, it was not as frank as it should have been. Emlyn Hooson, in an unrepentant speech (he had been on the Committee), showed quite clearly what the report meant by a lack of frankness. Maudling had not *taken* any remuneration; he had decided instead not to draw his salary of £9,500 until the company became profitable; the salary remained as a loan, by Maudling, to the company. For safety's sake, it is probably wise to quote Maudling's own answer to the Committee on this point:

> When my first fees became due I said I do not want the money at present but I would like to draw it in the future when the company is profitable. Therefore, pass it to me and I will pass it back to you; treat it as a loan. In other words, if I waive my fees to the company it is a gift to the company. If I postpone them it is a loan to the company. There was a mistake. Later, with my accountants, we corrected the books to alter it from a loan but as director's fees I was entitled to draw these fees but for the time being I did not want to do so.

Maudling was then asked: 'But if it was for the time being, that would amount to a loan for the company?' He replied: 'Exactly.' I fail to see how one can lend a remuneration one had not received.

But the majority of Members did not hear Hooson's speech. They had seen a way of getting out of a distasteful task. It was in the interests not only of Heath to let the matter slide, but also of Margaret Thatcher. True, she had sacked Reggie, for reasons he cannot understand to this day. But she had also, earlier, accepted him back into the fold, and she had done this after being privately informed by the Law Officers' of the exact nature of the evidence on his conduct. If the House had agreed with the report's conclusions on Maudling, it would have reflected on her judgment as well. Hence the feline performance of Francis Pym in winding up the debate – speaking, of course, only on his own behalf, you must understand, natch, but speaking from the Opposition front bench. It was Pym's preposterous suggestion that, since there had been a lot of *debate* about Maudling, and hardly any about Roberts, Roberts should be thrown to the wolves while Maudling should be let off the hook – a suggestion which was guaranteed to bring Labour members flocking to support their man.

Well, it was a good way to end the political year, a year which has been distinguished neither by great legislative achievements nor by the wisdom and vigour of the administration. It is pleaded in Labour's defence that, given the composition of the House, the Government is strictly limited in what it can achieve. Tuesday's debate, on the other hand, was supposed to be a non-party affair, a demonstration of democracy at its most solemn. And how did the House measure up to the occasion? Pretty feebly. Max Madden, in one of the best speeches of the evening, quoted a letter of Poulson's to 'the corrupt Maltese, Mr Abela'. 'I must say,' wrote Poulson, 'I admire the way in which you handle the politicians; you do it exactly the same way as I do in this country.' He went on to outline the ways in which politicians are still 'handled', and to call for appropriate reforms. One doubts if such reforms are on the way, or if the 'lessons' of the Poulson affair have been learnt. In the end, sanctimony has won the day, and the prodigal sons have been welcomed home.

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Michael Holman

Ian Smith's End Game

Whatever else the Rhodesian general election may be, it is not 'largely irrelevant' as Mr Callaghan maintained last week. Mr Smith is preparing for his biggest gamble since UDI itself and deserves better insight than this. Perhaps Mr Callaghan reflects the conventional wisdom which has just about written Smith off; presumably the same wisdom which allowed President Carter and Dr Owen to agree on yet another 'new plan' which deals with everything except the problem of how to get the Rhodesian Prime Minister's cooperation.

The white political pulse is being taken on the basis of an emigration rate of over 1,000 a month, a depressed economy, and the intensifying war. As these pressures increase Mr Smith is expected either to capitulate and preside over the dissolution of white rule, or cut and run for that mythical farm in the Cape. But things are not that straightforward. Emigration represents a loss of nerve and not a change of heart – important when assessing the fighting spirit of those who remain. Few whites are unemployed in a country which offers immigrants one of the highest standards of living in the world. And the growing success of the guerrillas, though it makes the West anxious to persuade Mr Smith to settle under their auspices, contributes to his intransigence. 'Communist terrorists' 30 miles from Salisbury confirm his worst fears.

For Smith should be seen as more than a backwoods racist. He is a white nationalist, the first prime minister born in the country, with a messianic belief in Rhodesia's role in world affairs and an apocalyptic vision of communism creeping down Africa. He passionately believes that unless it is turned back on his borders, southern Africa will fall under Russian domination, and the West itself will suffer incalculable damage. He believes equally passionately that any government-to-be can only resist the Red advance if whites have a guaranteed and influential role.

Mr Smith may have a self-fulfilling prophecy on his hands. He also has a metaphorical bunker under his office in Milton Building. The only people who can induce him to leave voluntarily are the 85,000 white voters, and it will be most surprising if next month the Rhodesian Front does not get the two-thirds parliamentary majority necessary to amend the constitution.

So what is he trying to do? Of course he wants to quash the right-wing challenge from the Rhodesia Action Party (RAP). But he is also seeking a mandate for the 'internal settlement' with so-called moderate blacks, a proposal he first raised in 1974. The bait for blacks is likely to be the offer of a majority in Parliament and cabinet. He could even grudgingly concede one man one vote. But wait for the catches: a white blocking third in Parliament and probably in cabinet; guarantees that white civil servants retain their jobs; maintenance of the existing judiciary; tribal electoral colleges for perhaps half the black seats; and because constitutional safeguards are worth little in themselves, white control of the armed forces. The Patriotic Front of Mr Nkomo and Mr Mugabe, the African states, and the West will all reject this, and will probably be joined by Ndabaningi Sithole and the popular Abel Muzorewa. Only Chief Chirau, president of the Zimbabwe United Peoples Organisation, is likely to play along, and ZUPO has negligible support and is almost certainly backed by government funds. It may look hopeless. But is it? Suppose that whites accept the new constitution – as well they might – and ZUPO contests the subsequent election.

E.E.C. Referendum
Anglo Draft
Fab Lab Pact
Colin Wheeler after J. Gillray
BRITANNIA between DEATH and the DOCTOR'S — "Death may decide when Doctors disagree —

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Muzorewa and Sithole are in a dilemma. If they fight the election the new constitution is given credibility; if they don't, they become increasingly irrelevant as the Patriotic Front pursues the war.

The crucial response, however, will be that of South Africa. There Smith won the Geneva public relations battle hands down. His image changed from that of an obstinate man who refused to adapt to that of a reasonable leader concerned only to give whites legitimate protection in the face of extreme African demands. Thus the ground has been prepared for Smith's final gamble. South African Prime Minister John Vorster is about to be presented with two options – an internal settlement which will certainly look fair to his own electorate, or the grim prospect of white Rhodesia resisting the PF to the last, inspiring a right-wing reaction in the Nationalist party.

Meanwhile the damage done by the Anglo-American settlement efforts is hardly appreciated in London. It may be recalled that Geneva chairman Ivor Richard, announcing the conference failure, left Salisbury in January warning whites that disaster lay ahead. But once again Britain was crying wolf. Within days fresh settlement efforts were under way, which gained impetus when David Owen decided that he had something to offer. In the uncritical comments that accompanied his southern Africa tour it was never made clear just how Dr Owen apparently made such a favourable impression on those two hardened campaigners, Smith and Vorster. Or indeed, what justified the trip to Rhodesia. There was not a tittle of evidence that Smith meant what he said about majority rule last September.

Further, Dr Owen visited Salisbury with extraordinary maladroit timing. It was the weekend before Smith faced a special party congress in a further bout with the 12 MPs who were to form the RAP. The Foreign Secretary's presence gave Smith the card he has played so often – delicate negotiations are under way, don't rock the boat. Luckily, the card did not prevent the consolidation of the Right-wing, one of the most encouraging developments in white politics. If Mr Smith is not going to accept a black government without a white veto, a break in RF hegemony will contribute more to deterioration in white morale than emigration and the depressed economy, and complements the war's intensification.

Post-Geneva efforts have impeded this development and bolstered Smith's position. The white conscript facing call-up overcomes his apprehension in the hope that talks will succeed. The hard-pressed businessman decides to hold on for yet another quarter in the hope of being in on the settlement bonanza. Worse, damage is done to British credibility among black Rhodesians in particular and Africa in general. Not only is British incapacity to deal with Smith exposed in a humiliating way; but negotiations take place against a background of political executions, some 400,000 tribespeople compulsorily regrouped in 'protected villages', and hundreds of mercenaries enlisting in the Rhodesian army to the apparent indifference of western governments. Nor is this all. Tragically, the strongest card in the West's thin pack has been crassly misplayed. The trust fund, part of the Kissinger terms but a proposal which goes back to at least 1972, is now regarded by many whites as little more than a ploy because so little has been made public. Thus a scheme which would give whites an alternative to their backs-to-the-wall stance, and give the insignificant white moderate opposition something with which to undermine the RF, has been neglected.

One example of its potential: civil servants comprise about one third the white electorate. Had they been able to read an internationally endorsed plan which set out ways to guarantee their pensions *provided* whites accepted a majority rule constitution drawn up under British chairmanship, this election could be taking place in a very different atmosphere. As it is, Western policy today is doing more harm than good. And to describe the election next month as 'irrelevant' reflects as serious a misunderstanding of the Rhodesian problem as Mr Wilson's notorious 'weeks rather than months' gaffe.

Robert McCloughin

Small Farms in Portugal

Two years after the event it is hard to remember that there was once a revolution in Portugal. As Mario Soares's Socialists move steadily to erase the work of successive radical governments back in 1975, the idea that Nato might have a Cuba budding dangerously on its western flank is all but forgotten. But the polemic caused by the Socialists' latest move is bringing those memories back with a rush. Preparing for a final showdown with the Communists, the Government has turned its guns on the last and greatest of the 'revolutionary conquests', with plans to limit land expropriation and reinstate hundreds of dispossessed private farmers and landowners. Once that is accomplished the flirtation with Soviet-style collective farming will be little more than a quaint and forgotten episode. Far from importing eastern methods to cope with its problems, Portugal will be set for the Common Market membership which the Prime Minister covets for his paupered and empireless nation.

For farmworkers in the Alentejo, a pastoral land of rolling meadows and wheatfields south of the River Tagus, the revised agrarian reform law passed in Parliament last week is the end of a dream. Barely two years have passed since the listless and chronically underpaid peasantry, underemployed for centuries by lazy absentee landowners, amazed the world by sending their oppressors packing. 'Fascist' *latifundarios*, bailiffs and foremen fled with the accumulated curses of generations ringing in their ears. In their place came into being some 400 worker cooperatives covering an area of one million hectares, christened with uncompromising names like 'Red Star' and 'The Struggle Belongs to Everyone' and jealously guarded from the prying eyes of foreign television crews and other agents of capitalist imperialism.

The collectives brought full employment and security benefits to the Alentejo. For the workers the return of the landowners means a return to the days of abject poverty. For hundreds of private farmers it means the end of two years of hanging around in rented rooms and haggling with lawyers over the vague prospects of compensation. It is by no means certain, however, that their return will bring the transformation the Government wants. The experience of some farms that have already been returned to their owners as 'reserves' within the collectives suggests that in some ways the future may just be a repeat of the past. Of two reserves at a collective near Erora, for instance, one belongs exclusively to a widow of 80 in Lisbon, the other to a farmer cultivating lands elsewhere. Since their release from the collective they have become a mass of weeds.

It is exactly this neglect that the Government knows it must eliminate. No one disputes the need for reform: with over 3 million people on the land Portugal produces less than half its needs. The rest it imports, chiefly from the United States – wheat, rice and maize – crops which it grows in the Alentejo. To call the region by the word beloved of commentators, the country's 'breadbasket', is in the circumstances highly inappropriate; with a yield of 1,200 kilos per hectare Portugal's wheat produce is among the world's lowest.

The Government is now in the curious position among agriculturally backward nations of tackling agrarian reform from the Left rather than the Right. The need to deal with landowners and farmers too rich, stupid or idle to work the lands to feed the country, has been removed. It must instead deal with the cooperatives which, whatever their economic pros and cons are condemned by the mere fact of their political orientation. For the Socialists, the right-wing Opposition and the private farmers' associations are the result of illegal seizures condoned by pro-Communist governments and now controlled by the dark forces of 'international communism'. They are in trouble for taking their orders from local union officials (Communist) and not from the Ministry in Lisbon. They are in more trouble for using state credits to pay for full security benefits for the unemployed quarter which the hordes of industrial jobless do not enjoy. Some have had their credits reduced for disobeying the Ministry and in certain cases money was stopped altogether when it was suspected that there were holes in their coffers which were apparently lead

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ing directly to the Communist Party headquarters.

Opponents have made it their business to show by every available statistic that the collective system is unproductive and designed to support 'parasites'. The workers wrecked their image with their initial behaviour, eating cattle with no thought of the morrow and selling machinery to pay for the pay rises (a cooperative worker now earns about £3 per day, women £2). Long after they resumed work, the notion remained that they were too bloated with their absent masters' meat and wine to do more than collapse in the long grass from one day's end to the other leaving the farmwork to look after itself.

But there have been some successes. Many farms doubled or even trebled the land under cultivation. Record harvests in the first two years were an encouraging sign that something positive was happening. In some cases the funds provided by the Government were spent on new barns, machine equipment and the irrigation without which the otherwise fertile region is hard to cultivate. But this year statistics are against them. Floods during the winter wrecked crops in a year of international plenty. Responding to the cries of 'told-you-so', the workers admit that they are handicapped by their ignorance and illiteracy, which have caused seeds and fertilisers to arrive late or not at all, unnecessary crops to be grown in unsaleable abundance and disappointing results to prevail. In the absence of the experts they expelled, the cooperatives have nothing more to guide them than common sense and occasionally a battered copy of *Bulgarian Collective Farming Principles*; and these are seldom enough.

To make the Alentejo profitable the Agriculture Minister Antonio Barreto intends to create a mixed but predominantly capitalist system out of the present shambles. By raising the limit for the size of farms allowed to remain in or return to private hands the role of the collectives will be dramatically reduced. In future credits will be given first to private farmers of varying categories and only last, assuming depleted funds stretch that far, to the collectives. Barreto especially wants to encourage the small farmers, the peasants with plots of ten or 20 hectares who were reluctantly sucked in to the cooperatives.

Now that the law has been passed, the difficulty will be to enforce it. Long after the rhetoric in Parliament has blown away the Government will have the anxious workers to contend with. Police patrols have several times been called on to protect farmers returning to their properties from peasants desperate at the prospect of losing their newly acquired lands, jobs and security and going to work for their hostile and unforgiving employers. Violent clashes have been frequent. It escapes nobody's notice, therefore, that President Ramalho Eanes, Portugal's stern saviour of democracy, spent a morning with his generals and police chiefs shortly after talking to Barreto recently. Whatever kind of 'operation' they may have been planning in the interests of democracy, it suggested an ugly Autumn in the Alentejo.

Lisbon

Bill Wedderburn

Industrial Democracy Revisited

Like most signatories of the majority Bullock Report, I have been disappointed by the debate that has followed. From the first, Bullock has been in the dock – presumed guilty. Even proposals that adopt much of Bullock and add to it are being represented as 'opposition' to it. The press has treated the new proposals of the General and Municipal Workers Union in that way.

These proposals clarify the less specific evidence given to Bullock by the GMWU and propose a wider 'General Legal Requirement' than anything in the report. But they deserve very close attention, not least because they are not bedevilled by the false issues that have cluttered up the 'consultations' conducted by the Government on Bullock. For example, it is taken for granted, and rightly, that joint regulation on the workers' side must be conducted through the 'single channel' of a company's recognised trade unions.

But the GMWU wants a more flexible structure than the option for a '2x+y' board of directors introduced after an affirmative ballot of all workers. The GMWU would give the unions a three-way option. They could *either* establish a Bullock '2x+y' board *or* a 'two-tier' system with 50 per cent workers' representatives on a 'supervisory board' *or* set up 'an alternative form of procedure and machinery, jointly agreed' to be registered under the Companies Acts. By spelling out the first two options clearly, the GMWU has apparently moved closer to the general TUC position. But it is with the third option that an attempt is made to add joint regulation over strategic corporate decisions – location of plant, redundancies, prices, products and, above all, investment – by means of something much more like collective bargaining machinery.

Now, Bullock did not ignore this road to industrial democracy, whatever its critics have claimed. Bullock said: 'At first sight the Swedish approach of statutory backing to the extension of collective bargaining might seem more appropriate to the British context'; and it mentioned the proposals made at the time by the GMWU. But Bullock found it impossible to formulate what the obligation on the employer would be – unless it were the 'duty to bargain in good faith' which has caused such legal nightmares in the US. And, further, it considered that none of the supporters of the idea 'was able to suggest an effective and workable sanction for breach of such an obligation'.

Of course the Employment Protection Act has set up legally enforceable obligations on employers to recognise unions where that is recommended by ACAS (which is what Grunwick is about). But the legal *sanction* for failure by an employer to carry out an ACAS recommendation is not a Court Order, disobedience of which would be contempt (we had enough of such Orders in industrial relations between 1971 and 1974); it is only an award of the CAC (Central Arbitration Committee) imposing new terms of employment for each individual worker in the company. Bullock felt that this was hardly an effective sanction to back up an obligation on an employer to negotiate (say) investment plans with a recognised union.

Now, for the first time, the GMWU has come up with new proposals which face the problems. Who knows what Bullock would have said if the details had been put to it? Certainly they are ingenious. If the unions choose the third option, the GMWU proposes that a jointly agreed machinery and procedure must be established. Legislation would require this; and, in the event of the parties being unable to agree upon a procedure and machinery, then a binding recommendation could be made by an independent agency (either ACAS or an Industrial Democracy Commission, if one were established as Bullock wanted). The distinction is rightly made between *substance* and *procedure*. The binding recommendation would only (under this option) establish the procedure. It would not be there to determine the substance of particular union/company agreements.

If a recommendation were ignored by an employer, the GMWU proposes sanctions that make the Bullock plan – so often presented as though it were the Bolshevik manifesto of our age – look like milk and water. A complaint would be made to the CAC by the union. If the CAC agreed that the employer had failed to observe the 'General Legal Requirement' under the agreed or recommended procedure, 'a third and final level of sanctions' would come into play. On the basis of such a ruling, the Secretary of State would have a variety of powers. He could withdraw benefit from the Redundancy Benefit Fund or eligibility for selective employment or investment assistance under the Industry Act. He could withdraw other employment subsidies. He could use the Price Code to refuse price rises. And ultimately – in 'an escalating range of sanction' that would, 'it is hoped, rarely be used' – he would have the power to remove the *taxation* 'privileges' which 'stem from the company's corporate status'!

NEXT WEEK

Paul Johnson
Seven Heretics in search of a Stake

A. J. P. Taylor
London Diary

Mervyn Jones
Sporting Occasions
First of a series of five articles on minority sports

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If he had all that in mind, it is no wonder that the GMWU's General Secretary David Basnett dubbed the Bullock Report 'not radical enough'. The whole apparatus of state support for the private sector would under these proposals, be used to wield sanctions against an employer who would not comply with the 'General Legal Requirement', under the third option, for a procedure whereby all company strategy is to be the subject of prior bargaining. Since I myself suggested in 1965 that a company that did not engage in ordinary collective bargaining should lose its corporate registration, I find myself warming to this notion. But it does have problems. Not just drafting and legislative problems – though these would be formidable, especially in tying up all the ends of the varying statutes dealing with prices, redundancy rebates, taxation and the like.

Nor need socialists furrow their brows too long about all the objections that would come from the City and the CBI against a use of such sanctions. The GMWU is surely right in suggesting that, if we really are serious about industrial democracy, the Government should have power to remove any or all advantages that flow from the state from a company that is not fulfilling its obligations on industrial democracy. The GMWU, as it puts it in its motion to this year's TUC Congress, 'welcomes the analysis of the Bullock Report' and is no doubt, as eager as any other union to extend joint regulation to the investment and other strategic company policies that cannot (and will not) remain exclusively with management in the 1980s. Its proposals give the final lie to the impression put about in some quarters that this union had lined up with the CBI in proposing something like the palsied 'participation agreements' proposed by that body.

But there remains one difficulty in the GMWU suggestions. If it can be solved, their three-prong plan might well form the basis of a renewed unity of purpose in the demand for industrial democracy. The Bullock option would still be open after the affirmative ballot. The 'one-tier' or 'two-tier' board problem is unlikely to present great difficulties here. One point of consensus that the government consultations *have* produced is that it would probably be better to seat workers' representatives chosen through trade union channels on a 'top' policy board, with a management board below it. But not – emphatically *not* – a 'top' board like the German Supervisory Board, a 'remote and passive body' as Bullock called it: rather a 'top' policy board on which management is also represented (with workers in parity representation) and with power of *initiative* over all company policies, on the Danish model.

The GMWU proposals just add another option under the 'General Legal Requirement'. What, then, is the difficulty? Simply this: it is no use having a law that requires the establishment of a procedure but which leaves one party free not to use it. The GMWU proposals see this point very clearly. The appeal to ACAS (or the IDC) and then to the CAC would be against 'failure to *establish* such procedures' (for effective bargaining about company policies) 'or failure in a specific instance to *observe* these procedures'. Enforcement mechanisms would be needed to establish 'whether or not a procedure had been established and observed'. Now, a procedure for bargaining is only '*observed*' if a party to it uses his best endeavours to put it to good use. When we come to the *observance* of a procedure, the distinction, based upon very respectable academic authorities in the industrial relations field, between 'substance' and 'machinery' begins to break down, because what is now at stake is not whether there is a machinery or not, but whether it is being abused or not adequately used. In other words, enforcement of the *observance* of a procedure for bargaining about strategic company policies would come very close to the issue of whether the employer had been 'bargaining in good faith'. The GMWU is insistent that it does not want to lead British industrial relations along the path towards a requirement that would mean testing the employer's 'good faith' in his bargaining habits. It is worth remembering that the American law that began with this idea in 1935 added the requirement in 1947 that the union also was legally obliged to 'bargain in good faith'. And it would not be wholly fair to the GMWU proposal to suggest that it inevitably leads to exactly the same type of obligation as the American duty to bargain in good faith. But it comes perilously close.

Yet it would be fainthearted to conclude that this is a problem to which there cannot be some appropriate British solution. It is no secret that the Bullock majority were not wholly averse to seeing an option of the type envisaged by the GMWU 'General Legal Requirement'. It may be that the GMWU proposed addition to Bullock will provoke yet further thoughts for solving the problem that caused us not to propose this legislative option in Bullock itself. But it is not solved yet. Nor has the GMWU yet explained how its proposals would apply to groups of companies.

Certainly the bold and radical suggestions for state sanctions against an employer who refused to engage in adequate participation from the top down, as well as from the bottom up, take the debate a step beyond the Bullock Report into new territory. Nevertheless the GMWU plan is not incompatible with the ground occupied by majority Bullock. It is complementary. Workers' rights to board representation will surely be a major instrument of industrial democracy in the next decade. But serious proposals for additional instruments – like those of the GMWU but unlike those of the CBI – should receive nothing but serious study from Bullock's Signatories.

John Mapplebeck

The Strange Death of Liddle Towers

Towards the end of last season the Leazes End, bored by a team that for all its honest toiling virtues badly missed the flair of Malcolm Macdonald, discovered a new chant with which to bait the police. In place of the one about Harry Roberts, the West London police murderer of a decade ago, they chanted, 'Remember Liddle Towers, Remember Liddle Towers . . .' It was a shout which began among the core of close cropped 'hard cases' behind the Newcastle goal but was soon taken up and echoed by their imitators at the Gallowgate end and all round the ground.

Not that 100 policemen around the pitch needed much reminding. They have got a chant of their own. Boozers, slow to finish off their pints and scotch within the permitted drinking-up time in Gateshead pubs, have reported being hurried on their way by policemen who quote the ominous verse, 'Hey diddle diddle, Remember Liddle'.

Liddle Towers may have been dead for 18 months, but he continues to haunt Tyneside. This week, the Liddle Towers Committee, an ad hoc group that sprang up in the wake of his death and the notorious coroner's court verdict of 'justifiable homicide', has been seeing the Northumberland Police Authority in the hope of persuading it to join the campaign to get a full public inquiry into the circumstances surrounding Liddle Towers's death.

After a year and a half, establishing those facts is going to be difficult; but what is not in dispute is that on 16 January 1976, Liddle Towers, a 39-year-old electrician and part-time amateur boxing coach, was arrested outside the Key Club in Birtley. He was taken to Gateshead police station where he was detained overnight – apart from three-quarters of an hour when he was examined at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. He was released the following morning after

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having been charged with being drunk and disorderly. Three weeks later he died in Dryburn Hospital as a result of injuries which his family and the police agree were inflicted that night.

Between his arrest and death, Liddle Towers had photographs taken of his injuries. These show clearly extensive bruising and abrasions to his arms and in the small of his back, injuries which he alleged were the result of being kicked and beaten by eight policemen, both outside the Key Club during his arrest and afterwards in the cells of Gateshead police station. He told a friend: 'They gave us a bloody good kicking outside the Key Club but that was nowt to what I got when I got inside.' To his mother, with whom he had lived since his divorce, he said: 'Five of them took their jackets off and kicked and beat me until I said: "If I've done anything I'm sorry but please leave me alone".'

The Inquest Verdict

The police argued that the injuries which caused his death, a ruptured pancreas, producing a massive internal haemorrhage, were the result of one constable kneeling on him after he had violently resisted arrest. They have been supported in this by the Attorney-General who has refused to prosecute any of the policemen involved, principally it seems on the grounds that 'there is no medical evidence to support a contention that Mr Liddle Towers's death was any way attributable to *wilful* violence or rough handling by the police'.

For Mrs Towers and Liddle's married sister, Marion Woods, the Attorney-General's decision is only one of many in the past 18 months that have gone a long way towards undermining their faith in British justice and police impartiality. What marks them off from the usual run of complainants about police brutality is their self-evident respectability. Mrs Woods has fulfilled that Durham working-class family ambition – the daughter who becomes a grammar-school teacher. She lives in a neat semi-detached house in Chester-le-Street with a sideboard full of tennis club trophies.

With the guileless candour of the truly law-abiding, she tells interviewers that Liddle was wrong to have resisted arrest and concedes that when he was drunk – he seems to have had six pints of lager on the night he was arrested, well within his usual capacity – he could be 'verbally aggressive'. This, of course, falls a long way short of some of the rumours that have been circulating on Tyneside, most of them from police sources. According to these Liddle was 'a violent tear-away who got what was coming to him'. In fact, his only criminal conviction, apart from driving offences, was for stealing three pounds of scrap-metal. He had no record involving violence of any sort.

The truth seems to be that when he had been drinking, Liddle occasionally trailed his coat in that Geordie *machismo* style which for all its apparent aggression is never much more than a surface stance; an attempt to prove to the world, and in particular the police, that you are not, as they say on Tyneside, 'soft as clarts'. The rumours of Liddle's supposedly violent character have caused almost as much distress to his family as all the official decisions that have gone against them. They point out that they cooperated with the police from the very start. When the police began the first internal inquiry they gave them the photographs that had been taken of Liddle's injuries and never at that stage sought any publicity, so confident were they that the police themselves would bring to justice the officers they believe were responsible for Liddle's death. What they did not discover until later was that this inquiry had been carried out by a Superintendent who until local government reorganisation had been in the same force as the men he was to investigate.

But undoubtedly the biggest blow was the inquest verdict itself. 'Justifiable homicide' is the verdict that used to be returned on convicted murderers after they had been hanged, and was the same verdict recorded earlier this year in the Hughes case when a police marksman was forced to shoot to kill to prevent the stabbing of a woman hostage. Mrs Towers has refused to accept the death certificate which records this verdict on her son and as a result has had none of the death grants she would normally have been entitled to.

Now the family are pinning their hopes on the Northumbria Police Authority adding its voice to the demands for a public inquiry. But this means in turn changing the mind of Merlyn Rees, who a month ago turned down the call for an inquiry when he met a delegation which included the family's Member of Parliament, Giles Radice, who has throughout taken an active interest in the case. The Home Secretary said then that he had been advised that a public inquiry into a single, individual case was impossible. There is, of course, no Alex Lyon at the Home Office these days and the Liddle Towers committee believes that the row over police pay has not helped their case either. They argue that the traditionally conservative civil servants in the department will now be even less likely to recommend any course of action that could further aggravate relations between the police and the Government.

It looks now as if the committee will be reluctantly forced to take up the expensive process of either a civil or criminal prosecution against the Chief Constable of Northumbria, Stanley Bailey, and some or all of the eight policemen involved. A new inquest which, it is said, the Attorney-General's office is half-way prepared to concede, is not seen as an answer as the coroner would be liable to impose the same restrictions on the evidence that can be called and in particular the cross-examination of police witnesses that led to the 'justifiable homicide' verdict last October.

No Disciplinary Action

There are those who continue to argue that the best hope lies not in Whitehall but locally with the Northumbria Police Authority. But the former chairman of the authority has already given tacit support to the Chief Constable's contention that the Attorney-General's decision that a successful prosecution could not be mounted absolves his officers from any blame at all for what happened that night. Indeed, Mr Bailey has already announced that there will be no internal disciplinary action.

Perhaps the members of the police authority would do well to bear in mind the experience of Christopher Price MP, who fought the Confait case so successfully. Although there are similarities between that and the Liddle Towers controversy, particularly in how far the police can be made publicly accountable for what goes on in a police station after an arrest, it is Christopher Price's earlier experience, before he entered Parliament, that is markedly relevant. He was a member of the Sheffield watch committee at the time of the Rhino whip affair when some police officers were found to have been beating up defendants in the city's police station. According to him, it is one of his greatest regrets that this was stopped only as a result of a campaigning crusade by a Sheffield newspaper and not through the vigilance of the Labour-controlled watch committee.

He believes that the police authorities have at least as much power as the old watch committees and can, for example, veto approval for any item of police expenditure if they are not happy with the way their police force is being run. Perhaps the real problem is not that the Northumbria Authority is unaware of its powers – it has been reminded of them by the Liddle Towers committee and by various resolutions that have come from within the Labour movement on Tyneside during the past year – but that it is unwilling to use them.

Roger Woddis

Last Straw

Thousands of misprinted £1 notes have slipped into circulation.

I've taken the worst that life offers,
  I've laboured and loved with the rest,
I've staggered from crisis to crisis
  And felt a sharp pain in my chest.
I've shuddered at crime and corruption;
  As if all these things weren't enough,
They tell me – O Healey defend us! –
  That thousands of greenies are duff!

I've held up my hands in horror
  At pickets and prices and porn,
And seeing the great axe descending,
  I've wished I had never been born;
But one simple faith has sustained me,
  Whatever the wounds in my flank:
That nowhere is freer than England
  And nothing as safe as the Bank!

I've gritted my teeth at disaster,
  Hung on to my vertical hold,
And stoically suffered in silence
  When Boycott came in from the cold.
I thought they would find at my passing
  'Threadneedle' engraved on my heart,
But now they've put paid to the Bearer
  And everything's falling apart!

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Jonathan Dimbleby

Acts of Man

When people can take no more they jump off bridges; governments place advertisements in the *New York Times*. Thus the military rulers of Ghana a fortnight ago paid their way on to page 6 of that newspaper to inform the world that all was well back home: that, inspired by their courage and determination, the nation was rapidly ascending 'the commanding heights of the economy in all directions'. And (we were left in no doubt) anyone who did not subscribe to this self-evident truth clearly belonged to one of those groups who 'have resorted to cowardly acts of rumour-mongering, falsification of facts, and downright incitement to rebellion'.

The issue between the military men and the 'cowards' who confront them is starvation; the question – is there or is there not a famine in Ghana? The issue is not so much about food or facts as politics. Ghana's military junta has rested its claim to international goodwill upon a policy of self-reliance, symbolised by a programme which they call Operation Feed Yourself. To a regime, beleagured by an economic crisis of great severity, by social unrest, and outright revolt, the concept of 'self-reliance' has acquired almost religious significance.

The philosophy was doubtless drilled into the phalanx of royal reporters who accompanied Prince Charles on his tour of Ghana last March, and whose coverage of the event did much to enhance the sagging prestige of the country's Supreme Military Council. It is unfortunate that none of them was in the Northern town of Bolgatanga the day after the triumphant royal visit there, to witness the pathetic queue of old people, women and malnourished children waiting for a grain handout at the Catholic Mission. A relief worker (who is a veteran of the Sahel drought, and to my knowledge not given to dramatic outburst) *was* there and later cabled to his head office: 'I cannot come to terms with the obscenity of seeing people in a food queue and seeing hordes of babies, many of whom you know will not live to reach adulthood'. Some of the people, he discovered, had walked 20 miles for food. Most of them were in a desperate state. Yet the Regional Commissioner informed him that there was no food shortage – make no mistake: *no food shortage*.

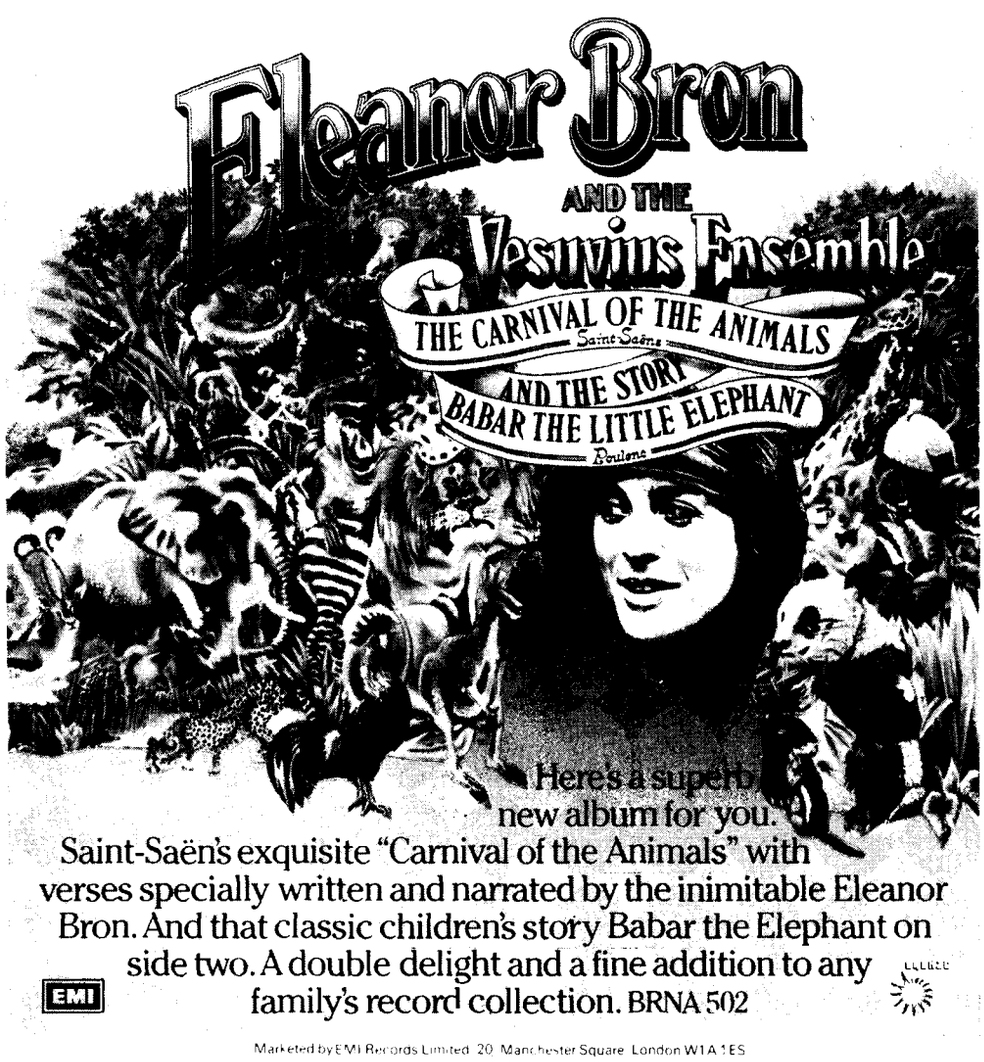
Fearful of reprisal, his head office – a private charity – has yet to make his reports public. Nor is this an isolated case. UNICEF, one of the most important agencies of the United Nations, has been bombarded with reports from Ghana which have convinced its senior officials in New York that there is a famine in the north of the country. Yet UNICEF has uttered not one public word on the subject. Nor apparently have its officials communicated with their colleagues in UNDP (the most prestigious UN agency) which knows of no famine – and maintains that in any case starvation is the business of the country concerned – unless its Government says otherwise.

This is the crux of a familiar problem. There may not be a famine in Ghana, but if there is no one will admit it. Sheltering behind the same diplomatic convention which permitted the famine in Ethiopia to be hidden from the outside world until almost all the dying was done, no UN agency, foreign government, or charity, will state publicly that disaster has occurred.

Alice-in-Disasterland absurdities are not new. In the last decade 'natural disasters' have occurred at the rate of one every two to three weeks; they have claimed no less than 3.5 million lives; they have affected the welfare of at least 400 million people; and they have played havoc with some 50 of the world's poorest – and most 'disaster-prone' – countries. What is more, there is evidence that in one-third of the 89 disasters which occurred between 1972 1976, relief to the victims was delayed, obstructed or withheld, for *political* reasons. To preserve national or international prestige, to retain treasured tourism, to protect precious foreign earnings from agricultural exports, Third World governments simply fail to acknowledge that they have a disaster on their hands. So, again and again, too little is done too late.

Disasters are unfashionable. Not so human rights. And as yet no one has made the connexion between the two. But next week a formidable array of American elder statesmen, including Hubert Humphrey, George Ball, Orville Freeman, and George Woods (former president of the World Bank) will publish a report for the United Nations Association of the United States, which, with luck, could make so-called Acts of God part of the arena of human rights. For, after one year's study, the committee concludes that when 'disaster victims are denied that which is necessary to sustain life and welfare' for political reasons, the 'responsible' authorities have in effect become 'adversary' authorities. This is tantamount – in legalese – to a declaration that governments can be enemies of their people. It is not a proposition to which the members of the UN are expected to subscribe with enthusiasm.

Most of the diplomats who race the corridors of the UN Assembly will hope to bury the report at birth, muttering much at the graveside about 'national sovereignty' and 'non-intervention'. They may succeed. But, in a year when even diplomats are obliged to genuflect before the altar of human rights, there is a chance at least that the politics of 'natural' disaster will no longer be excluded from their rituals.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Jeremy Bentham

The Case For a New LCJ

When in April 1971 John Widgery took over the reins of office as Lord Chief Justice of England in succession to Hubert Parker, there was a consensus among practising lawyers that his appointment was both right and inevitable. Right, because Widgery appeared to match up to most, if not all, the qualities expected of the occupant of the Lord Chief Justiceship, which includes the constitution of an ox to sustain the weight of that burdensome office. And inevitable, because there was no discernible rival to the plum judicial office – any potential contender was either too old or too junior.

As a practising barrister he had moved in limited circles, mainly because his expertise was in the field of planning law, and this meant that only a few professional colleagues knew him at all well. Others admired from a distance his skill as an advocate and the parade of his intellectual powers. If he had few close friends, it was due to his aloofness, and such of his conversation that was not of the 'shop' variety disclosed a dull, if not boring, man. (He has privately confessed that he is a boring man.) But for a profession that readily assesses the worth of its members – largely because it is a small tightly knit group with common interests – Widgery had no enemies, even if his friends were few. When in 1961 he became a judge, the appointment was widely acclaimed, and his judicial performance thereafter was of the highest quality. His promotion to the Court of Appeal followed inevitably; but again one heard little adverse comment from practitioners. Indeed, those who studied closely the judicial stakes noticed that he was being groomed to succeed as Lord Chief Justice.

Now after six years as Lord Chief Justice there is a substantial body of professional (not to mention lay) opinion that would welcome a change. Daily there are adverse views expressed at the quality of justice that emanates from Court No 4 in the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand. What has gone wrong with Widgery that feeds this significant switch in opinion?

The prime quality that Widgery brought to the office of Lord Chief Justice was unrivalled intellectual powers – an ability to disentangle even the most complex legal and factual problems and to produce an extempore judgment (he rarely reserves his judgments) of sheer brilliance for its mastery of the material and the symmetry of its composition, always delivered at break-neck speed, to the near despair of shorthand writers. In the dustier corners of the law that previously occupied the talents of Widgery, that kind of highly technical expertise was ideally suited to the task in hand. In the realms of criminal law and administrative law – the two branches of the legal system that daily occupy a Lord Chief Justice – it has proved inappropriate, inadequate, even defective.

Doing justice in the criminal appeal system requires a catholic mind and a large dose of humanity. Widgery has displayed neither from the Bench, although off the Bench he is a kindly man. His obsession with the administration of the court's heavy work-load has led him to hustle the litigants. His predecessor was no less expeditious in his dispatch of court business but had the happy knack of making the parties feel that they had had an expansive hearing. It is a knack that eludes Widgery. Combined with that defect has been Widgery's inability to handle the more garrulous advocates.

His desire to dispose of cases speedily is exacerbated by his unwillingness to explore any point that is not essential to the court's decision. And his aversion to legal academic opinion – he is that rare bird among our judiciary in that he is not a product of Oxbridge – means that he evinces a distinct distaste for any kind of jurisprudence. He hates a parade of citation from previous decisions of the courts; he searches for the relevant legal principles and pushes on one side anything that deflects him from that task. In the result his summary approach often leads him astray – not infrequently he has been decisively reversed by the House of Lords, as and when the few appeals from his decisions trickle through the sieve of the Court of Appeal. A great deal of the confusion in the criminal law today is the product of Widgery's unwillingness to relax and reflect a little longer on some major issues of criminal policy. Even then his inclinations are to toughen up the criminal law. His aversion to liberal principles is well known. When the American Bar Association met in London in 1971, Widgery vehemently echoed the sentiments of John Mitchell (then US Attorney-General and now a Watergate victim in a federal prison) that the Supreme Court decision, insisting on a suspect's right to access to a lawyer while in police custody, should be revised.

Since the Court of Appeal (Criminal Division) is the court of last resort in sentencing policy and practice, the Lord Chief Justice's role in that aspect of the penal system is crucial. Here Widgery has been anything but a force for progress. While Lord Parker supported the ending of capital punishment, Widgery, as recently as December 1974 in a House of Lords debate on the death penalty for terrorism, argued that 'for really serious, premeditated crimes the only way we can restore the value of human life for personal purposes is to return to capital punishment'.

Widgery's occupancy of the Chief Justiceship is exacerbated by the sheer weight of office. Outside the courtroom he has an immense amount of pure administrative work. Even for someone like Widgery who is a voracious worker, the load is crushing. A year or two ago Widgery suffered from exhaustion, and spent a short period in hospital. Since his return some of the characteristic acuity has gone from his judicial performance. He even acts tired. He now allows his fellow judges to give the court's judgment much more frequently than in the early 1970s. That is a sure sign of fatigue.

Hubert Parker was Lord Chief Justice for 13 years from 1958 to 1971, the last five of which witnessed such an upsurge in the volume of work that many feel that his death in 1973 was due in large measure to those exacting years. Unless the role of the Lord Chief Justice is redefined, by creating a new post of president of Court of Appeal (Criminal Division), thus relieving the Lord Chief Justice of the bulk of the criminal appellate work, the fear is that Widgery will finally wilt under the strain. His qualities as a judge are too valuable to be lost entirely. It is not too late to rescue him from any further lessening in his worth as Lord Chief Justice, and the hope is that he will acknowledge the fact and go.

If he were to go now (and possibly be translated to the House of Lords as a Law Lord) the question of succession will provoke much talk in the Temple. The rival contenders would be Lords Justices Leslie Scarman, Geoffrey Lane and Nigel Bridge. Scarman has been waiting in the wings for Denning to go, and become Master of the Rolls. Since there is no sign of movement in the incumbent of that other high judicial office (despite some hefty hints from successive Lord Chancellors) Sir Leslie might shift his gaze from one prized judicial office to another. In any event the Chancery lawyers are claiming that it is their turn for the presidency of the Court of Appeal (Civil Division); their favoured son is Mr Justice Templeman who is showing his paces as a member of the Royal Commission on Legal Services and would be a very acceptable choice.

Sir Nigel Bridge is hardly known publicly, save as the trial judge in the Birmingham terrorists' bomb case, in which he did not acquit himself to the entire satisfaction of the profession or the prison service that was under fire. But his track record is notable – a fine legal brain that, before his elevation to the Bench in 1969, was constantly and impressively at the service of government departments. A quick mind (somewhat in the Widgery mould) but responsive to legal change. His chairing of the working party on the training of judges has been commendable. Sir Geoffrey Lane would be a strong contender. He has both intellectual and judicial toughness to commend him to the more orthodox section within the profession. He has the special quality of quick but unhurried efficiency and has a happy disposition on and off the Bench.

If there were to be a split in the judicial functions of Lord Chief Justice a Scarman/Bridge combination would be formidable. The presidency of the criminal appeal court would have to be held for only a short time. To confine Lord Justice Bridge for more than a short time to criminal appeal work would be to restrict his talents. But he would be an invaluable initiator of a new structure to the criminal appellate process.

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Sue Woodman

Carnival Time

Last August, a one-time local festival, the Notting Hill Carnival, claimed international attention, and notoriety. There are four weeks to go now until Kensington is faced again by what should, after all, be an enjoyable occasion. But rifts between rival organisers, intransigence by the local authority and the police, and a blanket policy of non-involvement by the numerous funding agencies have created an atmosphere of growing foreboding.

The carnival has become important, not just as a way of taking the national temperature but as an opportunity to show the white community that black people are capable of successfully organising an event which has now grown so large that last year, on August Bank Holiday, it attracted almost a quarter of a million people. But this is not how Carnival began. In 1966, less than 10,000 people witnessed the celebrations of the West Indian 'Maas', staged as a purely local affair. By 1975, North Kensington's streets were overflowing.

Like it or not – and the majority of Kensington's residents, both black and white, do not – the Notting Hill Carnival has become a national concern. The problem is that responsibility for its organisation and funding has remained in the hands of the local people: and their hands are tied by stipulations issued from above. So it is particularly unfortunate that this year's preparations have been hampered from the beginning by a schism within Notting Hill's own black community.

A breakaway group, the Carnival and Arts Committee, set itself up to challenge the right of the existing Carnival Development Committee to continue organising Carnival after last year's troubles. The Carnival and Arts Committee was elected at a public meeting, open to 'all residents of Notting Hill'. Their strongest argument was, and has remained, that a community put in a position where it has to shoulder blame has the right to choose its own, accountable, representatives. But it is the Carnival Development Committee which has traditionally run things, and it has claimed that the new committee is composed of politically motivated opportunists, using the Carnival to promote their own questionable interests. It is run by Mr Selwyn Baptiste, a Trinidadian musician, who has been involved with Carnival since it started. While his rivals condemn him for his 'self-appointed leadership', he dismisses their elections as 'a farce'. He also criticises their plans to attach job-creation and associated projects to what he claims is traditionally a purely cultural and artistic event.

These fundamental differences of concept have kept the two committees at loggerheads for over six months; only in the last few weeks has each accepted that the Carnival organisation this year must now be a shared responsibility. And while the months slipped by in deadlock, Kensington and Chelsea Council, the police, the now defunct Community Relations Commission, its successor, the Commission for Racial Equality, and the various funding agencies have chosen to stand back and let the committees 'fight it out between themselves'.

Although everyone involved in last year's débâcle admitted that it was essential to start planning 1977 early, August Bank Holiday is approaching fast and no concrete arrangements have yet been approved by anyone. Serious negotiations now seem at last to be beginning. For the sake of the Carnival, the two committees have settled on an uneasy peace in order to approach the police: both being aware that it is with the police that the ultimate fate of Carnival lies. They feel that only if they agree to contain their forces is there a chance for the harmony on which Notting Hill used to pride itself. If not, they warn, police numbers could be the touch-paper for repeated violence this year. The police, however, won't bargain. They will not promise to diffuse their presence, and they maintain their right to keep control of the streets.

In 1975, with a crowd approaching 250,000, just 70 policemen supervised a peaceful weekend event. The presence of the 1,600 policemen who flooded North Kensington last year has been widely blamed for provoking the riots. This year, it is rumoured that they may double their numbers if the two committees organise separate processional routes. Of course the police maintain they want a peaceful Carnival, and will do their best to keep it one. They have hinted that compromise might be possible if enough stewards are mustered to replace policemen accompanying the bands. The moving processions and the crowds who gather to watch them, they insist, are two separate problems. But the black community has so far been unable to recruit anything near an acceptable number of stewards. 'This is partly through legitimate fear', Louis Chase, chairman of the Carnival and Arts Committee, admitted at a local meeting last week. 'But you, the community, must be prepared to take direct responsibility for this Carnival.'

Direct responsibility, however, is precisely what the two committees feel has been usurped. Since 1975 Kensington and Chelsea Council have insisted on playing a part, 'fulfilling their obligations to their ratepayers'. But they offer only to provide cleansing after the two-day event and portable toilets. There will be no grant, no assistance on the day, no money for stewards and above all, no enthusiastic support for the festival they continue to insist has 'outgrown the streets of North Kensington'.

The Commission for Racial Equality has chosen to take a diplomatic seat on the fence. It has offered an equal £500-grant to each committee. It 'condones' the event but deplores the rivalry. It has taken no further initiative; last week, the Carnival and Arts Committee decided to send back their share of the money. Hostility between the two black groups has probably reinforced the view of the authorities involved – from the borough council to the police – that the black community is incapable of conducting its own affairs. Now, despite all their clamours to be left to do precisely that, a note of self-doubt is creeping in.

At a stormy meeting of the Carnival and Arts Committee held in North Kensington last week, Louis Chase said his group could no longer accept responsibility for a community when the authorities obstructed them from carrying out their obligations. 'Because of the lack of support from our own community and the authorities we shall have bloodshed on Carnival Monday – and blame will be unfairly laid on the black man,' one member proclaimed. Whatever happens, the growth of Carnival from a small, local event into a vast national festival has, sadly and ironically, helped to undermine the morale and self-esteem of the community which gave it birth.

'As a race we are perfectly foul to our old people . . . . . gruesome booklet . . . . . The obvious response to AGE CONCERN'S distressing pamphlet, YOUR RIGHTS, would be a Central Office pamphlet called YOUR OPPORTUNITIES . . . . . .'
Auberon Waugh *Spectator*

There's nobody I'd rather debate with than Auberon Waugh!'
David Hobman *Director, Age Concern*

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AGE CONCERN

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London Diary

☐ I reckon it's best to save everybody's time and clear up the Maurice Jones mystery. To begin with, the police can't really expect us to believe that people arrested on demonstrations are simply booked, formally charged and released on bail. When I was picked up after a confused series of events connected with nuclear disarmament, I didn't get home before being ushered into a quiet room and introduced to a gent in plain clothes. It was reminiscent of being a prisoner of war, and my mind dredged up the old Army rule – don't tell anything except your name, rank and number. I'd just thought of this when, to my astonishment, the gent asked me my Army number. I replied automatically: '14319536' (if you've been in the Army, it's forever engraved on your memory). To cut the tale short, those files contain a complete biography of the sinister, bearded subversive, M. Jones. You're with me so far? Right. Well, if they can't tell David Owen from Will Owen . . . You catch on? Right. No wonder the poor chap emerged frightened and incoherent, after being confronted with everything he'd ever written in the NS Diary.

☐ Press reports of Wednesday's clash-shock-drama meeting of the Labour Party's NEC will be comprehensible (if at all) only with some knowledge of the background. This, frankly, is one of rich confusion and any emerging clarity will depend on the response to a letter which Ron Hayward sent to all members on 4 July. 'At more than one meeting this year we have failed to conclude the business,' he pointed out, and went on to deplore the habit of putting resolutions straight to the NEC instead of to the Home, International or other policy committees. He also expressed unease about the number of documents that members are supposed to have read before each meeting. And well he might – the bumf is normally packaged in a folder, but on this occasion it wouldn't go into two folders, and was left as a stack four inches high. Finally, Hayward expressed a fear that the annual conference might be as chaotic as the NEC. It can't last more than 4½ days, there's a visiting speaker in the form of François Mitterand (a case of trying to get a litre into a pint pot, I foresee) and documents for consideration are flooding in. Hayward writes: 'Our minority position in Parliament means that we must be ready at any time and at short notice to fight a general election. The issues in such a campaign would clearly be the economic situation, jobs and prices. I am strongly of the view that we should direct the attention of conference to these issues.' Good sense, of course. But one way out of the difficulty would be to have the election instead of the conference – a thought that must have crossed the mind of some NEC members.

☐ I really can't understand why there's all this argument about the neutron bomb. It kills people while leaving property intact; surely this is just what the Western world has been looking for. If it doesn't embody the highest ideals of civilisation as we know it, I don't know the difference between *Encounter* and *Men Only*. But, although we should all pay tribute to the scientists who have made this commendable advance, it's my duty to point out that they still have work ahead of them. The ideal weapon would have (pardon my jargon) an in-built pigmentation-sensitive predictor-mechanism. To spell it out, we need a bomb that doesn't kill white people.

☐ My one memory of Sid French, leader of the New (but fundamentalist) Communist Party, goes back to a by-election in Wigan in 1948. French was among the campaign workers and gave me a lift back to London in a battered pre-war car. At that time, anyway, he had a lively sense of humour and we were laughing most of the way. The by-election was a setback for the CP, partly because the communist seizure of power in Czechoslovakia and the death of Jan Masaryk occurred two days before the poll. The top brass, including Harry Pollitt and Johnny Campbell, were up in Wigan and composed a leaflet, which had to be handed out at the mill-gates early in the morning in a snowstorm. The leaflet began: 'Rejoice! Democracy has triumphed in Czechoslovakia.' I don't know what view Sid French would take of this incident today, but in 1948 he found it hilarious.

☐ Paul McCormick, one of the two bright young things who organised a right-wing comeback in the Newham North-East Labour Party, is cross with the *Guardian*, which suggested last week that he'd been playing the same games as the dreaded militants. 'You may find,' he wrote to the editor, 'that the last laugh is on you – those who cancelled a meeting because they were going to lose it would not hesitate to cancel an unsympathetic editorial. From what I have seen of them I don't think the Newham left-wingers have got much of a sense of humour.' True, maybe, but a sense of humour wasn't McCormick's outstanding quality when he was at Oxford a couple of years ago, and *Isis* printed a hostile but patently jokey item about him. He slapped down a writ, secured a hefty sum in an out-of-court settlement, and thus crippled the paper to the extent of making it impossible for some issues to come out. In fact, as the *Guardian* intimated in the first place, his motto is the same as that of the Trots: let a hundred flowers bloom, provided they're all the same colour.

☐ I spent last week in Yorkshire as a tutor in fiction-writing under the auspices of the Arvon Foundation. I had accepted with trepidation, since I firmly believe that creative writing can't be taught, but it worked out pretty well. The students came along with quantities of material, I commented in the spirit of a helpful reviewer (I mean, not like a reviewer in real life) and I hope I did some good. They were a splendidly mixed lot, including four schoolboys, a senior civil servant, a retired teacher and a Welsh steelworker. The house belonging to the Foundation is remote and picturesque (there's also one in Devon which I'm told is likewise); the atmosphere is relaxed and free from pressure; there's no radio or television; altogether, it's a great way to spend a week. I was lucky in that my fellow-tutor was Angela Carter, whose highly original novel *The Passion of New Eve* I'd lately been reading with enthusiasm. As a writer, and also as a teacher, she has the vital quality of being receptive to anything. She's generally regarded as a fantasist, but now I'm not so sure. I told her one of my stories which I file as 'true, but too improbable for a novel'. Thoughtfully pressing the top of her ballpoint pen, she remarked: 'I'd use that, you know.' After pondering for a moment she added: 'Actually I'm a realist – I wish I could convince people.'

☐ About the meanest attack of the year is the onslaught on War on Want evoked by the donation to impoverished Grunwick strikers. The *Sunday Telegraph*, fulminating against the way this charity 'dishes out its money', exclaims: '£150 for the Grunwick strike committee, indeed!'. A double distortion: the money wasn't from War on Want funds but was a whip-round among staff and committee members, so there's no question of diverting money that anyone had sent in for Third World poverty; and, though channelled through the strike committee, the money is clearly earmarked for that committee's Hardship Fund, set up to help strikers' families through lean times. The War on Want people feel simply that need is need, on any continent. So do I.

☐ More news from the Central Line platform at Tottenham Court Road. Last week somebody chalked up: 'Legalise pot.' By now it's been altered to read: 'Legalise spots.' I await developments.

Mervyn Jones

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Lord Harewood was cleared at Bow Street Magistrates' Court yesterday of two motoring offences. He successfully claimed that he did not realise he had backed into a parked car because he was listening to a Mozart wind serenade on his car radio. Lord Harewood said he might have confused the sound of a burglar alarm, which was set off on the parked car, with a sustained clarinet note. – *The Times* (Jay Ferguson)

☐ An organisation calling itself the National Association for the Abolition of Television, or NAATV, has applied to the BBC for use of their *Open Door* access programme to appeal to viewers to switch off their sets. – *New Society* (James Kelsey)

☐ A small, fresh-faced Ted remarked: 'I'm not thick like some Teds. I can tell a Punk apart from a Soul Boy' (another faction). 'I'm in Equity'. He produced a membership card from the actor's union and said he was soon to appear in a production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. – *Sunday Times* (M. M. Gleave)

☐ A rabies scare started after Custom's men at Teesside airport were told that a holiday-maker had brought a dog home from Yugoslavia ended when the 'illegal pet' was found to be a china dog. – *Daily Telegraph* (E. G. Breeze)

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Anne Bennett

Kept in the Community

'Calls will just increase to use the number of phones available,' I said to this senior on hearing we were to have an even bigger switchboard. 'I mean the poor devils trying to phone in won't have a chance against us phoning out' – but he said he relied on the individual social workers' self-discipline to prevent that. 'Give me strength,' I said to Arthur (he having caught me in the midst of a private call). Well perks of social work are few, though I did get a bundle of rhubarb recently from a lady whose garden I had admired with an eye to the future of her gooseberries.

Anyway as soon as I was off the phone I went to see this old lady who had taken against her neighbour after she had lived in harmony with her for several years and had subsequently been judged subnormal by a consultant psychiatrist who, though he noted with approval that she managed her money well for someone of 76, deplored her tendency to think of its value in pounds, shillings and pence. 'So do I,' I said, to which he gave no answer.

Mrs Tweed had been despaired of by her GP. 'I gave her *largacta*,' he cried having been called out by the warden of her sheltered housing for the umpteenth time. 'How many?' she asked. 'Enough to keep her quiet,' he replied unrepentantly. Unfortunately, her gentleman friend, dropping in for his cup of tea, had found poor Mrs Tweed slumped in a comatose position over the tea cups and had taken it upon himself to hide the tablets. 'Now why should he do that, eh?' said the warden to me. She was a large lady who wore her black hair in a bun and favoured button-through nylon overalls in strident colours with voluminous pockets which housed the keys to every conceivable cupboard and door in the place.

'He was worried,' I ventured.

'There's more going on there than meets the eye,' she said. 'I think she needs a Part III. I said so to Housing and they said they'd ask you to have a look.'

'Are you from the doctor?' said Mrs Tweed when I banged on the door of No 53.

'Well, he knew I was coming,' I said. Some people think the working class aren't in touch with their doctors but they still trust them more than anyone else.

'Come in,' she said. She was short and stocky with a blonde fringe which clashed with her 76-year-old face. Her eyes turned in which didn't help matters. I addressed myself to her right eye with some chat and eventually got round to Miss Burt next door. 'I keep complaining,' she said resignedly, 'but the warden, she does nothing about it.'

'Ah, but she is doing something about it,' I said, 'and what she's doing may well end up with you having to leave here. So what you must not do is phone the warden at all hours or shout at Miss Burt in the street. I mean, she isn't talking about you all the time, is she? Like now for instance.'

We both listened. Silence.

'You see,' I said triumphantly, 'it's not all the time. Look, I suggest you write down when you hear her talking about you, don't go and bang on her windows and I'll call and see you next week.' 'Do your best to keep her quiet,' I said to Mr Barret who'd dropped by for his cup of tea. 'And don't hide the tablets – tell the doctor outright that they are making her sleepy.'

'Salt of the earth, she is,' he said solemnly. 'By God I don't know what I'd have done without her. Kept me going she did a while back when I wasn't too good. Well we've got to keep her here then haven't we?'

'Right you are,' I said and I was out of 53 and at 54 in no time. A lady, who had to be Miss Burt, was polishing up her doorknob and sweeping out her front with great gusto though keeping an eye on No 53.

I went over to her. 'Could I have a word with . . . ?'

'I've been told to say nothing,' she said, as though the matter was of supreme importance to the wider world.

'It's all right,' I said. 'The warden sent me.' She let me in.

'My doctor told me not to talk about it,' she said. 'It upsets me so, you've no idea.' I agreed that it was very worrying.

'Nine years we've been neighbours,' she said. 'She was here first. I came a month after her to the day. Right from the beginning we got on well, not that we were in and out of each other's houses all the time but we had our arrangements. I'd pick up her bread and she'd pick up my paper or if one of us was going into the town we'd call over and ask the other if they wanted anything, you know. Three months ago I noticed it first. She didn't speak. I thought maybe she wasn't feeling too good, worried about something. But a week went by and still the same thing. In the end I said "What's the matter, Jessie? Have I offended you?" And she just turned on me, started shouting she did, said she knew I had those men in here and what they were up to spying on her. Shouting it out she was, all the street could hear. Now I hardly dare go out of my door in case she sees me.'

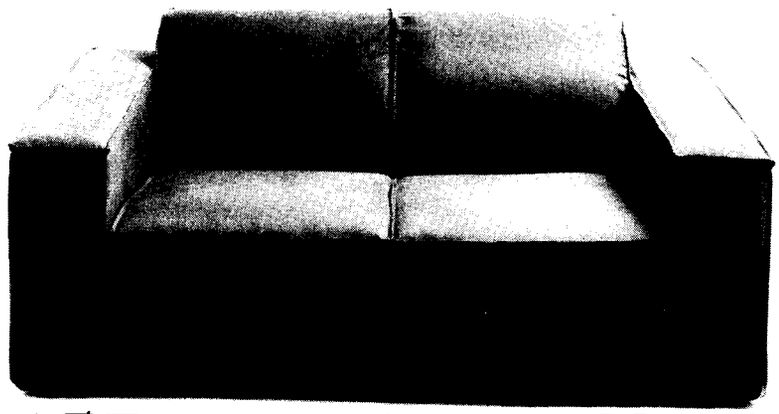
Perhaps I should have given her more sympathy. 'Of course it is worse for her than for you,' I said, 'isn't it? I mean, you know that it's all delusion on Mrs Tweed's side, that she is a kind lady really, a good neighbour – you said so – whereas she really believes that you are spying on her, that these men are in your house and . . .'

But it was no good. In gentle little Miss Burt's face was no compassion for her neighbour, only hate; the dislike of the insane by the sane, of the irrational by the rational. 'But why pick on me?' she sobbed, 'why on me? I've always led a good Christian life.'

'There's not a lot I can do,' I said to Miss Burt. 'Well, someone will have to do something,' she said. 'I've written to my MP. You'll have to get her moved away.'

So I wrote to the psychiatrist suggesting she needed his skills not mine, to the GP saying it wouldn't get her off his back to move her to a home – he would simply have to visit her there instead – and to Housing saying there were no grounds for moving her and they would have to live with it. No one will love me now, I thought.

So as an act of contrition I filled in a questionnaire from Planning which said: Thank you for giving us these useful facts, in return for which we will be able to give *you* useful facts. Still, even sociologists have to live in these hard times. I saw the other day that Peter Townsend himself had been reduced to heading a committee to discover why the middle classes keep their teeth while the working classes lose theirs.



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First Person

Arthur Marshall

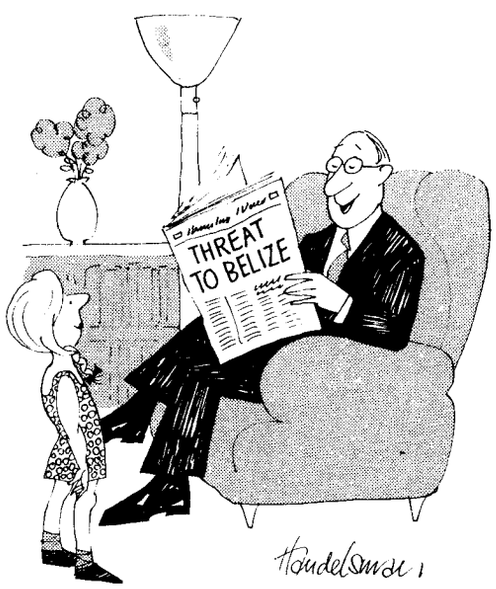
Don't Forget to Write

In my agreeable circle of Devonian friends and relations, centred on our picturesque little village of Appleton, we are all great postcard senders. Apart from cheques, few communications are pleasanter to find in the morning's mail. They give brief news, they feast the eyes and they require no answer. My Cousin Madge wouldn't dream of making one of her adventuresome trips without sending me an informative coloured p.c., even if her destination is somewhere as relatively near-at-hand as Weston-Super-Mare (by which they really mean Weston-Super-Bristol Channel – well, look at the map). Miss Entwhistle's bi-annual visits to Scarborough, which by our Appleton standards puts her firmly in the globe-trotting category, result in a shower of heartening Views jammed with excited scribbles outlining her doings. The Bultitudes' postcards tend, of course, to come from smart foreign parts and kindly unbend to our level ('We think you'd enjoy this amusingly grubby little *hôtel*'). It is Mrs Bultitude who takes care of the epistolatory side of this happy and productive union (three sturdy youngsters, now grown up and fled the cosy nest) but, when it comes to sticking on stamps, Mrs Bultitude is, I am sorry to report, nothing but slapdash. No neat alignment. No head the right way up. For a French *timbre* or a German *Briefmark*, any position at all will plainly 'do'. Who, after all, won the war, may one ask?

It is perhaps just as well for her and the Colonel's peace of mind that she clearly knows of a French postcard called *Langage du Timbre* ('*La position du timbre exprime le désir secret du coeur*'). It features a love-sick frog pair, entwined in a sea of tastefully tinted pansies (those flowers that are 'for thoughts') with, all around them, drawings of stamps stuck on crooked and the secret meaning contained in each lopsided position. Thus, when Mrs B greets our vicar from afar with the harbour at Cannes by moonlight and off-handedly tilts her *timbre* to the left, she is saying '*Je vous adore*!' A hasty p.c. to the milkman, asking him to start up his lactic visits again on the 10th, with the stamp upside-down and crooked at that, says, as plain as plain, '*Aimez-moi toujours*!' I myself have in the past received from her the Opera House at Milan ('Spotti in great voice last night') with the *timbre* or, in this case, *franco-bollo*, lying down sideways and signifying '*Je reste fidèle*', which I can only hope means *fidèle* to the Colonel.

Our knowledge of postcard history (they began in America in 1861) is enormously increased, thanks to Jupiter Books and at a cost of £5.50, by witty Alan Wykes and his splendidly illustrated *Saucy Seaside Postcards*. One's thoughts fly at once to the famous artist, Donald McGill, originator of that classic example of parental distress ('I've lost my Little Willie') and here is, among many others, his story and majestic reproductions of his output. Ill-rewarded (at first he got an outright payment of 6/- a card, and as a result died leaving merely a few hundred) and infinitely respectable, he relished the pleasing fact that at the old boy dinners of his public school he was always put next to the Bishop of Wakefield. In this field, respectability does win occasionally through (Blackpool, of all places, has been known to sniff disapprovingly at certain jokes, prior to banning them. Whatever can they have been?) and what goes well at Llandudno may be frowned on frostily at Lowestoft, but by and large the merriments of nudist clubs (usually called either the Snogmoor or the Koolbums) are universally popular, together with chamber-pots, Scotsmen's kilts and the mysteries that lie beneath, wedding nights, a pint beer tankard with a smiling face on it ('I shall be glad to see your jolly old mug again') and an enormously stout lady tumbling, in a shower of boulders, down a cliffside ('I've fallen in a big way for a boy down here') with a great display of knickers. McGill, naturally.

One has, of course, one's favourites. I particularly like the two tipsy gentlemen strap-hanging in the Underground and the dialogue that accompanies it: 'Is this Wembley?' 'No, it's Thursday.' 'So am I. Let's have another drink.' And there is the man giving helpful information to a distraught lady hunting her missing cat which has taken refuge beneath a small car ('Miss Cox, I can see a little fluffy thing under your mini'). There is also an hysterical male hospital patient flying half-clothed and in great disarray down a corridor pursued by a muddle-headed nurse holding a steaming saucepan, while a doctor chides her with 'No, no, Nurse Duncan, I said prick his boil.' Get it? All simple fun, here excellently assembled and paraded.



'Yes, child, there is *a British Empire.'*

The slightly less saucy and more basic side of our investigations is much assisted by *Erotic Postcards*, the thoughtful work of Barbara Jones and William Ouellette (Macdonald and Jane's: £4.95) and it is brimful with illustrations of the many treats of yesteryear. When, a few years ago, almost every bookstall and paper-shop in the land started to provide magazines featuring bold ladies defiantly displaying their vast busts (big is beautiful, it seems, in the chest world), the day of the erotic, and publicly saleable, postcard was finally over, and we can here discover what we're now missing. Cheer up. It doesn't really amount to very much. Our grandfathers appear to have been fairly easily stimulated – scantily dressed actresses dangling pairs of cherries from pearly teeth and looking roguish, ladies rigged up in military uniform and symbolising discipline by cracking whips in a menacing manner, unbridled apache dancers throwing each other violently about, and seaside fisherwomen bending over the better to scoop up shrimps on a blustery day and affording a generous eyeful of bloomer for male strollers along the promenade.

There were accepted rules about nakedness. Models stripped off, donned white body stockings and pretended to be statues. Naked statues were Art (even Queen Victoria was known to gaze admiringly at statues) and Art was perfectly all right. Muscular and fig-leaved men were allowed to present themselves publicly provided they were personifying something respectable such as Agriculture or Peace or Industry or Plenty. There were, inevitably, numerous photographs of the famous and notorious – a semi-draped Mata Hari taking time off from her sketchy cloak and dagger commitments and about to go into her undulating *Danse Indienne* (there is another snap of her improbably disguised as a nun). And there was La Belle Otero, by far the most successful courtesan of the last century (her clients were almost exclusively crowned heads, our own deplorable old Edward among them), who died penniless in Nice at the age of 97 and in the very act of preparing a rabbit stew. What a lesson for the immodest!

A final dazzling pictorial round-up, darting from one fascinating book to the other, produces aquatic runs in the pool ('May I splash you in the deep end?'), huge bare ladies stuck in the doors of bathing-machines, shameless *Françaises* eating jumbo asparagus in a provocative manner, robust girls climbing trees or being peered at through key-holes or getting tied up or spanked. There are frilly garters galore and harem inmates and wet lower lips and enormous pink behinds and mishaps on bicycles and a double meaning whichever way you turn. There is nothing here nowadays to shock, unless it be the ugliness and the vulgarity and, throughout, the total lack of wit, apart from that kindly supplied by the good Mr Wykes and his fellow-researchers.

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Letters to the Editor

Myra Hindley and Parole

Sir, Lord Longford's article on Myra Hindley and Parole (NS 15 July) raises many particular issues, but it is essentially about the fundamental relation of punishment to crime and it is upon this matter that I am in complete agreement with him, and would like to comment. There must be, I would claim, limits to any punishment, however deserved and for even the most heinous of crimes. No punishment should be tolerated in a civilised and officially Christian community which produces irreversible changes in the personality of the one punished. I am satisfied that an unbroken succession of time in prison, a period which may vary in individual cases between six and ten years, is almost certain to destroy beyond repair personality elements which are absolutely necessary if he or she is to emerge from that confinement with any prospect of real recovery.

How am I so sure of this? – because for many years I was a prison chaplain and I have seen it happen. No punishment which destroys a moral dimension in the punished is justified and long terms of imprisonment do just that. I am not arguing for the release necessarily at the end of six or more years of the criminal guilty of a particularly wicked crime. I am supporting Lord Longford's plea for some sort of parole or variation of custodial treatment which will keep bright and visible a light at the end of the tunnel, and see that the tunnel is not so monotonously long as to deny that prospect. The one thing punishment may never do is to extinguish hope. Liberty must often be rightly withdrawn for periods of time, and many of the amenities and pleasures of life may well be withheld, because the process of reformation contains very properly the infliction of unpleasant disciplines. Nonetheless the worst villian is entitled to a measure of hope.

All this is no argument for the sentimental attitude to the criminal, which is all too often accompanied by an indifference to his victim. It is an indictment of the prison system with its precept of putting away those who offend against society, rather than accept responsibility of so punishing the offender, as at one and the same time to seek to safeguard the community and to reform the culprit. Until we are prepared to renounce the prison system it is unlikely that we shall be able to choose another and better one.

DONALD SOPER

Methodist Church
Kingsway Hall
London WC2

Sir, The answer to Mr Watkins's question (Letters 22 July) as to why the man is always supposed to be the dominating influence in a crime committed by a man and woman together is excellently given by Mr Bumble, the henpecked Beadle in Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist*, who when told he was to blame for a theft committed by himself and his wife since 'the law supposes that your wife acts upon your direction' replied: 'If the law supposes *that* the law is a ass – a idiot.'

SYBIL MORRISON

6 Apollo Place
London SW10

Naff Said?

Sir, Some time ago, sick and dismayed by the closed-shop sackings at Ferrybridge and British Rail, I subscribed to the NAFF's legal fund on behalf of the victims. Now I have just seen your paper (NS 15 July) in a local newsagent and read part of the article attacking John Gouriet. The article is worthy of your Baader-Meinhof ethic. I remember the day Ross McWhirter, founder of NAFF, was murdered outside his house under the eyes of his wife and I remember the propagandist statement made by the IRA afterwards. The next day I had to go to work and mix with sniggering jubilant Leftists.

I remember when the Tory students of Southampton University proposed to send a message of sympathy to McWhirter's widow. The left-wing students defeated this and instead passed a motion condemning Ross McWhirter for bringing about his own death, and going on to blame the police for causing the Birmingham pub bombings. It is standard strategy for the new fascist Left never to accept moral responsibility for their own crimes. It is the standard tactic to blame the victim. The only person to be admired and blameless is the criminal. All middle-class values must be inverted.

The contents of your own paper propagate the same Satanism, the same red fascism, the same war against respectability. You are the real scabs against Britain. Naturally you don't approve of John Gouriet or of any other decent person. I wonder what effect the word 'decent' would have on your contributors. Your females, shades of the Manson family in sniggering tittering triumph, might go off into such paroxysms of laughter at the word 'decent' that they might do themselves an injury. Anyway it'll be something for them to tell their Sinn Fein boyfriends about. The female Leftist is the archetype camp follower. I would doubt if one in a hundred of them could realise that, say, the recent machine-gunning to death of Jewish children in their classroom was morally wrong. The Russians call the female Leftists *Fordinki* or little Fords – churned out like identical cheap cars.

If you don't approve of John Gouriet whom do you approve of? Well of course Myra Hindley – who else could it be? Do you never think of the mental agony that such articles and campaigns cause to the parents of the murdered children – you who believe in 'phasing out punishment'? What political motive has the New Left in always supporting the criminal? Like Hitler you draw your strength from evil having become fashionable and, like him, you are the morally hideous little monsters of totalitarian socialism.

JOHN ABREY

Durham

Sir, Can I comment on Peter Dunn's article on the National Association for Freedom, and Robert Moss's reply? Peter Dunn asked me some time ago about the formation of the NAFF. I mentioned to him that the inaugural meeting was held on 29 July 1975. That is so. And therefore one can say that the organisation has been in existence for approximately two years. During the time before the public launching on 2 December 1975, important work was done, not least the formation of the Charter of Rights and Liberties (on which Norris McWhirter did sterling work), and the creation of a distinguished and liberal Council.

But Robert Moss is also right in stating that the NAFF has only gone public for about 18 months. And Peter Dunn has unreal standards if he feels that the NAFF should be criticised for 'obscurity' during this time. I can think of few organisations that have got off the ground so fast, and have had such major impact in so short a time.

MICHAEL IVENS

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Sir, If the entertaining Mr Robert Moss of NAFF did not exist then someone would have to invent him, I suppose. However, I did not invent facts about NAFF as he asserted last week (Letters 22 July). For the record, it was NAFF's spokeswoman who told me that NAFF had received a cheque from Lady Birdwood. Since she said nothing about it being returned I can only assume that the decision to do so was taken after my inquiry. And it was Major Gouriet, NAFF's full-time administrator, who told me that legal action had been considered against the Sex Pistols. Mr Moss does not seem to have been taken into his confidence. Sad.

PETER DUNN

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Australia's New Governor-General

Sir, I write neither to defend Gough Whitlam nor to help Allan Ashbolt bury him (NS 22 July). My only comment on his formidable catalogue of defects is that they comprise a counsel of perfection unlikely to be attained by any successor – an issue Ashbolt ignores. 'The economic base remains unchanged by his efforts', for example, is a complaint which could equally be levelled at every other Labour prime minister of Australia – and, indeed, at almost all social democratic prime ministers anywhere and any time.

But apropos Ashbolt's doubt whether the replacement of Sir John Kerr by Sir Zelman Cowen as Governor-General will diminish 'the steadily rising Republican agitation' it is worth recalling that, in 1966, Cowen discussed the dismissal of the Lang Labour Government in 1932 by the New South Wales Governor, Sir Philip Game, and concluded: 'It is very unlikely (to put it conservatively) that the Queen (or for that matter a present-day Australian Governor) would take such spectacular action.' Is it not reasonable to infer from this that, if Sir Zelman had been in Sir John's shoes in November 1975, the constitutional coup probably would never have taken place?

What is more, in the same essay (in Geoffrey Dutton's symposium, *Australia and the Monarchy*) Cowen expressed the view that Australia could constitutionally be converted into a Republic by the referendum provision in section 128 of the Constitution, and he calmly envisaged the Queen and her representative completing the process which extinguished her constitutional authority. Would it not be felicitous, as well as richly ironic, if, thanks to Kerr's high-handedness, it now fell to Cowen to undertake that historic duty?

NOEL MCLACHLAN

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FO Deficiences

Sir, Paul Johnson's defence of the Foreign Office (NS 17 June) makes convincing reading – if one has not experienced its representatives abroad in action! As an economist with an international banking organisation, I too visit innumerable embassies, British and foreign. Almost without exception as far as commercial affairs are concerned, one's experience is the same – one seeks information from the American, French and German embassies, and gives it to the British.

Why is this? Three explanations present themselves:

(1) Most British commercial attachés are in the great PPE tradition, knowing a little about everything and nothing in depth, having successfully avoided soiling their hands (or brains) with any real work since leaving university.

(2) There is almost positive discouragement from Whitehall of any latent instinct to go out and search for business – a complete contrast to French and German practice where business/embassy links are very strong (it is noticeable that businessmen are not among the list of embassy entertainees quoted by Mr Johnson).

(3) Scant regard is paid to ensuring fluency as opposed to rudimentary knowledge of local languages. While this may be understandable in Afghanistan, it is hard to understand why someone with only schoolgirl French could be posted as Second Secretary to an important French colony in West Africa, as I personally know to have happened recently.

Still, Peter Ramsbotham remembered Mr Johnson's inanities after 20 years – can one think of a better reason for rejecting the idea that a young and well-known economist should join the ambassadorial ranks?

M. C. DICK

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Protecting Our Lord

Sir, Of course, Graeme Woolaston is quite right (Letters 22 July); the blasphemy trial was an attack on homosexuals. When Oscar Wilde's trial was mentioned at the Old Bailey, Judge Alan King-Hamilton commented that Wilde was not tried for blasphemy, 'No', came the swift reply from John Mortimer, 'for homosexuality'!

Although Mrs Mary Whitehouse, the instigator of the case against *Gay News,* may deny she wishes to hound homosexuals, the evidence does not bear this out. She has alleged that the Albany Trust, which has had a lot to do with legal changes affecting sexual minorities, 'misused public funds'. Moreover, in her recent book *Whatever Happened to Sex?* she says most people feel a 'natural repugnance' towards the subject of homosexuality. She follows in the steps of St Paul, in describing 'shameful passions', and, without giving her sources, writes of homosexuality: 'In medical circles it is thought of as some probable hormone deficiency which delays the normal development between puberty and adult life. but psychiatric literature does record a 60-per-cent rate of cure by one method or another.' This view is quite contrary to most expert references on the subject.

Mrs Whitehouse's reaction to the now 'illegal' poem is medieval; first, in using medieval laws to attack it, and secondly, in her vindictive desire to punish *Gay News* and its editor, in the manner heretics were assailed in the past. Parliament must be urged to bar the common law of blasphemy; it was probably the threat of its use to exclude Jens Thorsen from this country last year, by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Home Secretary, which reminded Mrs Whitehouse that it was a useful stick with which to beat homosexuals.

DENIS COBELL

Lewisham Humanist Group
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London SE4

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A Landlord's Lament

Sir, Much as one's heart bleeds after reading Audrey Harvey's *miserere* to the dispossessed at county court eviction hearings (NS 22 July) she would, I feel, be serving a more useful purpose were she to show the other side of the coin. For each tenant awaiting eviction there is at least one landlord desperately and expensively trying to reclaim his property, or one who is too sceptical of the courts' discretion, or merely too impoverished, to even lay claim.

The accumulated Rent Acts are, without doubt, the most pernicious body of legislation ever to be enacted in a so-called democracy in a time of peace. and it is to this the writer should have addressed herself. If these were rectified, together with the whole concept of council housing, which in this day and age is an anachronism, scenes such as she describes would be a thing of the past. We believe that people not property should be subsidised, that people in need should be given help whether they are council or private tenants, and that it is iniquitous that one section of the ratepaying public should, willy-nilly, be compelled to subsidise high wage-earners who have the good fortune to occupy council property. The money saved on grandiose and frequently inoperable housing schemes, to say nothing of the savings in provisions for the homeless, would run into hundreds of millions a year. The current Rent Acts with their ludicrous, multifarious divisions, categories and standards, are an affront to human dignity and bring into question the sanity of government. Why, on the one hand, should council tenants be subject to such tyranny, and on the other, landlords driven into despair and bankruptcy, the psychiatric wards and suicide?

JAMES STEVENS
Chairman

Small Landlords Association
7 Rosedene Avenue
London SW16

Inside the European Parliament

Sir, The Christopher Price tour of the European Parliament (NS 22 July) was excellent. We could see where the rain comes in and understand why the foundations are cracked in places – but overall still a desirable residence for some EEC aspirations. Then comes a resounding silliness about the Common Agricultural Policy and its hoped-for reform because of EEC *enlargement.* How can he believe two or three extra agriculturally weak men will add up to a strong one? And why should greater floods of olive oil and wine, to take two examples of products already in massive surplus, make reform easier or be an economic advantage to Britain? If the CAP, as Price believes, is not to continue being an umbrella for 'inefficient and expensive farmers' who produce this stuff, the alternative – for them – is the dole queue in an industrial city. That is hardly what the Greeks and Portugese have in mind.

I recall that, at HMG's request, the CAP has already undergone a 'stocktaking exercise' since the Community was last enlarged. Does Mr Price remember this too? My copy of that report ended up lining a wastepaper basket.

DAVID HAWORTH

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Bullseye

Sir, After chuckling my way through Mr Arthur Marshall's speculations about the identity of the birds in Tennyson's 'Maud' (NS 15 July) I happened to open *The Oxford Book of Literary Anecdotes* at No 309, in which 'Margot Tennant, later Countess of Oxford and Acquith. meets the Poet Laureate'. He read to her, at her request, from his poem 'Maud'. She writes:

> He began 'Birds in the high Hall-garden' . . . When he had finished he pulled me onto his knee and said:
>
> 'Many have written as well as that, but nothing ever sounded so well!' I could not speak.
>
> He then told us that he had had an unfortunate experience with a young lady to whom he was reading 'Maud'.
>
> 'She was sitting on my knee', he said, 'as you are doing now, and after reading
>
> Bird in the high Hall-garden,
> When twilight was falling,
> *Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,*
> They were crying and calling
>
> I asked her what bird she thought I meant. She said, "A Nightingale". This made me so angry that I nearly flung her to the ground. "No, fool! . . . Rook!" said I.'

This passage, reprinted from *The Autobiography of Margot Asquith.* will remove Mr Marshall's bafflement and prove to your readers that he hit the jackpot with his surmise about the rooks!

MABEL FRY

8 Heathcote Close
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Nearby Corners

Sir, Fascinated to read of Paul Vaughan's crafty successes with the crossword (Letters 22 July). I hope that the mysterious judge of correct entries notes his guile and remembers his handwriting. I must tell you that I have dispatched entries (correct of course) from Ullapool, Marseilles, Dubrovnik, Sevastopol and Brisbane and never had a mention, let alone a book token. I concluded that all this travelling was doing me no good and now I've settled in Holborn for a while so watch out – my entries will be at Great Turnstile Friday morning (if not earlier)!

ROGER T. BOTTLE

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Christopher Isherwood

The Life of the Party

The Spiral Ascent by EDWARD UPWARD
Heinemann £6.50

The Spiral Ascent contains three novels: *In the Thirties* (1962), *The Rotten Elements* (1969), and *No Home But the Struggle* (1977). Their central 'character' is called Alan Sebrill, but this is evidently an autobiography, only slightly fictionalised. In the third novel, the author switches from the third person singular to the first, making Alan himself the narrator.

Early influences, including perhaps heredity, have caused Alan to grow up writing poetry. He always thinks of himself as a poet, not conceitedly, not even very ambitiously, but as one who has a lifelong vocation, with certain responsibilities imposed by it. Without this vocation, he at first believes, life would instantly become unliveable for him; he can see no alternative to it but suicide. At the beginning of *In the Thirties* Alan has just arrived at a remote seaside village. Here he hopes to lead what he calls the Poetic Life, both writing poetry and cultivating a mood of poetic awareness which will range from a study of the local customs, inhabitants, landscape, flora and fauna to a pursuit and capture of at least one local girl. The environment is duly studied; the girl (a beautiful specimen) is captured. But all in vain: this phase of Alan's poetic life ends with the annihilating discovery that it can provide him with no valid subject for the kind of poetry he wants to write.

Alan is no romantic recluse, despite his romanticism. Although shy, class-conscious and temperamentally inclined to be a spectator of life, he is acutely aware of the world he is living in and of the military adventures of capitalism which must climax in a second great war. He has already studied Marx, though with a theoretical rather than a practical interest. Now he is forced to realise that, as long as he remains outside the struggle, out of touch with those who are actually working against capitalism, his poetry *can* have no valid subject. After an agonising inner conflict, during which he seriously considers killing himself, Alan leaves the village and returns to London, where before very long he joins the British Communist Party.

The Party gives him so much work that he has little time to write poetry: for the present, he hardly regrets this. He tells himself that he and his comrades are struggling to prepare a new communist world in which the Poetic Life will be possible for all who want to live it, instead of being reserved for those who have private incomes and no public conscience. Alan decides that

> the poetic life was the finest life. No other, not even the Party life, could compare with it. But to try once again to live it would be to retreat towards failure and dishonour, would bring him farther from it than he was at present.

Meanwhile, Alan is welcomed into a brother and sisterhood of fellow-fighters, and feels the joy and inspiration of a shared purpose. The Political Life may be inferior to the Poetic for a person of his nature, but it does have evident meaning and is a valid subject (he believes) for poetry. And now – after all the inhibited romantic yearnings and unsatisfactory sex-encounters of his Poetic Life – Alan finds an uninhibited relationship, anti-romantic but loving and lasting, with Elsie, the working-class girl he marries. Elsie is already a Party member when they meet and, like himself, she earns her living as a schoolteacher. Thus Alan, no longer isolated, dwells within the community of his marriage – soon to be enlarged by a son and a daughter – and remains a part of the greater community of his communist comrades.

The narrative of *The Rotten Elements* begins in the late 1940s, after the end of World War II. Alan and Elsie and their children have survived and their home life is happy. Both of them are still active members of the Party – rather too active, too critical and outspoken, from the viewpoint of their Party leaders. For Alan and Elsie become convinced that the British communists have deviated from Marxist-Leninist principles by supporting the Labour Government's imperialistic foreign policy. The two of them reach this conviction most unwillingly, after wandering through a maze of doubts and paranoid fears, both sinister and comic, which Upward marvellously evokes. The Party leaders are not amused. Rejecting all criticism, they tell Alan and Elsie that it is *they* who are the deviators, 'the rotten elements'. When they refuse to recant, they are expelled from the Party.

Expulsion doesn't do Alan any material harm: he still has the schoolmastering job which he has now held for many years. Elsie and he are closer than ever, drawn together by their stand against the Party. Alan feels that he has been set free to return to the Poetic Life; he can still write poetry for communism. When he begins work on the first of his projected poems, however, his doubts return:

> He had to recognise that the whole conception of the poem was at fault. Its central theme, that he could serve the Party by living the Poetic Life, was a nostalgic lie. He had reached a dead end. 'I am on trial for my life,' he thought. He must not panic.

But he does panic. His latent paranoia reappears in an exaggerated form. He has a nervous breakdown with violent physical symptoms, and it is many months before he recovers. At last he begins to believe that a Poetic Life is possible for him, but of a different kind:

> He saw it as freeing him wholly from the Party. The poems he would create would be primarily poems and only secondarily political statements. The poet needed the help of a Party, just as the struggle needed the help of poetry. But when a Party abandoned the struggle the poet must repudiate it, no matter how isolated he might become for a while.

On this note, *The Rotten Elements* ends.

No Home But the Struggle opens with Alan and Elsie living in a house near the sea which Alan has inherited from his parents. As retired teachers they both have pensions and their children are grown-up and self-supporting. There is now no financial or occupational obstacle to prevent Alan from leading his New Poetic Life. This new kind of Poetic Life requires a new technique. Alan decides that he must systematically remember his imaginative impressions during the years before he first became politically active. The house in which he and Elsie are now living is an ideal starting point for this journey of recollection, since he has visited it throughout his life and it is full of early memories. On the whole, he finds that his memories give him happiness, even when they are not happy, and strengthen his morale. He has, for instance, recently broken out of a mood of despondency by remembering how, at his first boarding-school, his imagination survived and developed despite the stunting conditions – conditions far worse than any which he now has to contend with. The greater part of this novel is therefore a narrative of Alan's childhood, adolescence and young manhood. It continues right through to the point at which the narrative of *In the Thirties* begins and even goes a little beyond – so that there are passages of description which actually repeat the words of the earlier novel, with a curiously powerful and disturbing echo-effect. For my taste, it is the most brilliantly written of the whole trilogy.

At the end, we return to Alan at his present age and there is a further development. He has at last finished the long poem which he began writing six years ago. This poem ends by celebrating the New Poetic Life. Alan doesn't repudiate it. The reconstruction of his poetic and imaginative past was necessary, he says, but now he must again make his poetry serve the political struggle. Not in the old way, however. He and Elsie have long been members of the local CND group, as a sort of minimum political activity; now they must try to influence their group to go beyond simple opposition to nuclear weapons and campaign against the whole monopoly capitalist system. Soviet Russia can no longer be looked up to as the leader of the Revolution, but new potential allies are appearing. The Chinese communists have begun to use against the Russians exactly the same arguments which he and Elsie used, 15 years before, against the non-revolutionary line of the British Communist Party. Thus we say goodbye to Alan, as he prepares to begin a New Political Life.

Upward has a narrative tone of voice which is peculiarly his own. It is certainly

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not the voice of the contemporary entertainer-novelist, who knocks himself out trying to make his readers laugh or weep. Upward's tone is unforced; it creates comedy or tragedy without apparent effort. It is quiet, yet it conveys an intense excitement. It is detached, yet it can convince us of passionate self-dedication and deep love. It is reasonable and sane, yet it can also speak the language of madness and hallucination.

Upward sits you down and makes you examine an insect, a flower, a human face; makes you listen to schoolmasters' shoptalk or beery jokes in a pub; makes you follow a flat-footed political argument – always with a heightened and fascinated sense of their inner significance. In his Poetic Life there are no bores, no platitudes, nothing dull or unremarkable, because everything is re-observed with such detective sharpness, such an appetite for hidden value.

For Alan himself, there is indeed 'no home but the struggle'. With all his fears and procrastinations, he remains unwillingly, heroically committed. While full of understanding for the weakness of others, he subjects himself to a relentless scrutiny which is both aesthetic and moral; no thought and no action can be dismissed by him as neutral. Well may he say, 'I am on trial for my life'; he is both the accused and the judge. High hopes were raised when Upward published the first and second of these novels. It was said that, if the third turned out to be as good, the trilogy would be a masterpiece. Is it? Yes. But let me go further and say that *The Spiral Ascent* (I do hate that title, though) is one of the most truly original books in modern literature.

Clive James

Only Human

Reaching Judgment at Nuremberg by BRADLEY F. SMITH *Deutsch* £6.50

No expert in either international jurisprudence or the formal study of modern history, I can perhaps represent the general reader in welcoming Professor Smith's new book as a substantial contribution to the understanding of the age we live in. *Reaching Judgment at Nuremberg* could easily have been the sort of book that leaves you wondering whether this is an age worth living in at all. It might have brought the horrors to mind without making sense of them, which would have been depressing. Or it might have made sense of all the horrors without bringing them to mind, which would have been more depressing still. But the author has proved himself equal to this most formidable of tasks. He has uncovered new facts without being tempted into unbalanced opinions. The issues are raised and treated without the innocent dead being further dishonoured. Despite its terrible weight of subject, this is one contemporary historical work which leaves you with the encouraging feeling that the form and pressure of modern political tragedy might somehow be transmitted intact to the generations that will succeed us.

If it now seems evident that genocide was the central issue in the Nuremberg trials, we largely have the Nuremberg trials to thank. It was only during the trials themselves that the industrial scale of the Nazi onslaught on innocent people came to be revealed. During the preparation of their case, and indeed during much of their conduct of it, the prosecution lawyers were seldom able to grasp the significance of what they were faced with. Especially on the part of the Americans and the British, there was a striking inability to imagine what everyday life had been like in Nazi Europe.

Fortunately the tribunal itself was quicker on the uptake. Drawn from all four of the occupying powers, the judges were on the whole able to see the correct import of evidence so overwhelmingly awful that the prosecution scarcely knew how to present it. One of the many services performed by Professor Smith's book is to show that Nuremberg was not a kangaroo court. Even the Russian and the French judges were able to act with some independence from their governments. It is true that some of the defendants were arbitrarily chosen, true that the indictment was questionably framed, and true again that some of the verdicts were anomalous. But by and large justice was done. The idea that at Nuremberg the victors tried the vanquished is a false one.

The vanquished were the millions of guiltless men, women and children already obliterated. Most of the men on trial were victors who would have remained victorious if something had not been done. Whether or not they deserved death in their turn, they certainly had *something* coming to them. The Nuremberg tribunal, in making sure that they got it, went some way towards a squaring of the accounts – and in making sure that they were tried by due process achieved something better than mere revenge. Revenge would have been a raindrop echoing an ocean.

The accused were indicted on four counts. Count One concerned a general conspiracy to wage aggressive war. Count Two concerned substantive crimes in furtherance of that end. Count Three concerned war crimes as defined by the Geneva Convention and similar agreements. Count Four concerned Crimes against Humanity. Although it might seem obvious to us that Count Four is the one that matters most, the prosecution focused most of its efforts on Count One. In retrospect this might seem hard to explain. Conspiracy theories have a bad reputation among lawyers and this particular conspiracy theory is no longer popular even among historians, who have done their best to convince us that Hitler's plan for world conquest was really a sequence of brilliant improvisations. Yet at the time of the Nuremberg trials the climate of opinion dictated that the Nazis should be punished collectively, even if the punishment was only symbolic. As revealed in captured documents, the sheer cynicism with which Hitler had toppled governments shocked the world. Anybody could appreciate that here had been a pack of gangsters on the loose.

Count Four, on the other hand, although it seems of enduring importance to us, was difficult to cope with at the time. Since there were no statutes covering crimes against humanity, law had to be invented *ex post facto* – always a questionable procedure. But, as has since become clear, separating Count Four from Count Three was a crucial move. Even though the fact was not generally accepted at the time, in the matter of ordinary war crimes the Allies were fully as guilty as the Axis powers. It was the extraordinary crimes which made the Nazis special.

Convinced that Count One was the heart of the case, the prosecution presented its evidence on Count Four so unsystematically that Rudolf Hoess, the Auschwitz commandant, was put on the stand only as a *defence* witness, in an attempt to exculpate the party hierarchs by showing that the exterminations had been undertaken on local initiative. (The seed of the David Irving thesis was planted 30 years ago.) But the tribunal was wiser than the prosecution. Most of the evidence was in the form of documents, repetitively presented with a doggedness that bored the court stiff. The testimony of witnesses, which might have made the subject vivid both for the bench and for the watching world, was sparingly employed. Nevertheless the judges quickly educated themselves in Nazi realities. In this department as in most others they showed themselves independent of the prosecution. They might not have been the very top men in their profession but they had legal reputations it was in their interest to keep intact. Beyond that, they simply happened to be a group of reasonably decent men. With access to their papers, Professor Smith is able – and obviously glad – to show that their deliberations were rarely cynical, even when circumstances forced them into absurdity.

Most of the absurdity came from the choice of defendants. Each occupying country wanted to include some of its own captives, with the result that the dock held the obscure as well as the notorious. Alfried Krupp would probably have been there if the prosecution had not mixed him up with his mad father Gustav. On the other hand Fritzsche, who had never done much and whom nobody had ever heard of, *was* there. There was an element of farce. But for the most part the verdicts sorted the defendants out. The small fry were thrown back and the bigger fish were fairly sentenced. Most importantly, they were sentenced as individuals, for substantive crimes. There was not much resort to the conspiracy theory. With the exception of Streicher, men were punished for what they did, and

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not for what they said they might do.

Granted that hanging was an appropriate punishment, those who were sentenced to it deserved no less. Goering, Ribbentrop, Kaltenbrunner, Rosenberg, Frank, Frick, Sauckel, Jodl, Seyss-Inquart . . . apart from Rosenberg, a batty ideologist whose books not even the Nazis could get through, they all knew what they had been at. Among those executed, Streicher was the only really doubtful case. An awful man who edited an awful newspaper, Streicher was hanged for his bad character rather than substantive crimes. He was a victim of the conspiracy theory if anybody was. There is no reason to waste grief on him, but we can wish that the judges who hesitated might have hesitated harder. The Russian judges, as always, didn't hesitate at all. They wanted the death penalty for everybody and saw no objections to *ex post facto* law. As we now know, Stalin's post-war purge was already rolling at the time of the trials. But the Nuremberg trials can't be written off just because the Russians participated in them. If we now have standards for measuring Soviet history, Nuremberg helped to establish them.

Streicher was hanged and Speer got 20 years. Professor Smith is now able to reveal that some of the judges wanted the rope for Speer. Whatever you think of capital punishment, it is difficult not to hope that Speer has been suffering a slight difficulty in breathing after hearing this news. Speer got away with it. When he sent his demands for forced labour down to Sauckel, he knew what the results would be. His air of civilisation saved him from death. If the Nuremberg trials had dealt out divine justice, Streicher would have been released into the care of an animal trainer and Speer would have been punished to the full extent. But as things were, the tribunal was only human. Speer got the benefit of the doubt. The court had the drawbacks of its virtues, the chief virtue being its moderation. In extending due process, humane treatment and mercy to men who would have liked to drive those things from the face of the earth, the Nuremberg judges did us a favour we will be a long time repaying. This excellent book is part of their reward.

James Cameron

Mrs Mao

Comrade Chiang Ch'ing by ROXANE WITKE
Weidenfeld £6.95

Let us come clean: any reviewer who has been in possession of this big (and may one say a bit inflated?) book for less than three uninterrupted weeks is at a great disadvantage. Its 478 pages of text plus another 48 of notes and glossaries require, and often deserve, a lot of concentration and a tight memory for complex Chinese personal names. I will admit that I have not absorbed it all, but enough to set me forth on another try. Lord Weidenfeld has taken the unusual step of circulating a letter saying it is his belief that this is one of the most important books he has ever published. This may well be the case. It is certainly one of the most ample. It is also, as far as I know, the first thorough record of the life and thoughts of the widow of Chairman Mao, and in view of her present circumstances will almost certainly be the last. It could be the final memorial to this daunting lady, once so high and now so low.

Roxane Witke is Associate Professor of History at the State University of New York, having done a round of academic appointments in Chinese studies, and even had a consultancy to the State Department. No wonder; with the Chinese she knows what she is talking about – even, intermittently, in their own language. She certainly appears to have acquired a remarkable in with Madame Mao, to the extent of here becoming her Boswell. It is not a bad analogy; she is neither adulatory nor critical, though one feels that it was a bit of a knock for Ms Witke when Madame Mao fell off the pedestal into the ditch. Now that Teng Hsiao-ping, her sworn enemy, appears to be rehabilitated in the Peking pantheon, Madame Mao's chances seem to be slim indeed; Ms Witke got there just in time.

The Associate Professor would have made a wonderful newspaper-person. After the famous Nixon visit to the People's Republic and China's entry into the United Nations she at once had her foot in the door of the Chinese delegation in New York, and somehow or other charmed herself into an invitation to Peking. And there, after groping through the labyrinthine complications of Asian bureaucracy, she abruptly found herself in the Presence of probably the most dominant woman in the East, and by and by became her confidante. It was an extraordinary feat.

Geoffrey Grigson

West Window

Consolations were: Christ, Heaven,
Judgment, devils at the mouth
Of the great whale, and glow of these
Through minds stained with the bright
Salts of copper, cobalt, iron.

And now –
What now, whispers to himself upon
His knees the priest, *now time hurts me,*
Home walks away, and deserts me,
And all is Beast?

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This book, then, is a record of many hours and days of conversation with Chiang Ch'ing at the height of her authority, from her own notes and clearly an enormous volume of interpreters' transcripts. To follow it exactly demands a pretty considerably knowledge of Chinese revolutionary and post-revolutionary goings-on, which from 1949 have been enigmatic, to say the least, but threaded through by the enormous personality of Mao Tse-tung, the Hunan peasant who overwhelmed the most populous nation in the world.

Just how his First Lady arrived will perhaps never be quite clear. She was born Li Chin in Shantung province in 1914; she moved through a series of different names (which was not unusual in Chinese society then) until she became Lan P'ing, the famous Shanghai actress. She was already deeply involved in revolutionary activities, more or less inevitably, in those awful Thirties. She left Shanghai under the threat of the Japanese siege in 1938, and finally found her way to Mao's stronghold in Yenan two years after the Long March. There – somehow or other – she became Mao's mistress and later his wife.

She was, to be sure, Number Four. Mao had long ago repudiated his first wife, a peasant imposed on him by his parents. He married and then abandoned his second wife, who had borne him three sons and was then executed by the Huomintang. His third wife went mad during the dreadful Long March and finished up in an asylum. It seems that Comrade Chiang Ch'ing (as she had now become) felt, unsurprisingly, a certain insecurity, not just domestically but politically. Mao's two designated successors, Liu Shao-ch'i and Lin Piao, fell suddenly and incomprehensibly out of favour and were destroyed, for no given reason. As Chairman Mao retreated increasingly from the political throne into remote and godlike philosophy, the more did Mrs Mao, Chiang Ch'ing, feel her own sense of destiny, until in 1972 she rode on the wave of the Cultural Revolution she had herself inspired into direct competition to become his heir.

The Peking hierarchy, no less than any other, had its many devious and intimate conspiracies, and they had seen this coming way back. Chairman Mao Tse-tung had been dead only a month when the widow Chiang Ch'ing and her three colleagues Yao Wen-yuan, Wang Hung-wen and Chang Ch'un-ch'iao, were whipped inside as enemies of the Party, and as the 'Gang of Four' probably achieved more celebrity in the West than ever in their days of fame. There they remain, accused of attempting to assassinate Hua Kuo-feng, Mao's successor. There they will doubtless stay, and Hua rules, OK.

'What actually happened,' says Ms Witke,

> may never be known. Set forth to the Chinese people were judiciously selected parts of Mao Tse-tung's notes and conversations, to be accepted as the 'mandate of heaven' in his dying days.

They were not as favourable to his widow as is Ms Witke, but then who knows what they were?

After Chiang Ch'ing's arrest and disgrace she was vilified as only this sort of society – puritanical, dedicated, and cruel – knows how. She was a profligate, a whore, an addict of pornographic films, a rider in limousines, a vain and ambitious upstart: when the Party sets about disgracing someone, they do it good and well. Roxane Witke gives another aspect to the tale. Let it stand. One way or the other, we shall probably never know.

Craig Raine

Jolly Good Show

Under Siege by ROBERT HEWISON *Weidenfeld* £6

As Ivan Denisovich pockets a precious bit of hacksaw blade, Tsezar discusses the merits of Eisenstein with prisoner X 123. There's something oddly persistent about intellectuals. In a rather bizarre way, they validate Descartes's *Cogito*. I am therefore I think. Robert Hewison's absorbing account of cultural life during the second world war corroborates this clear and distinct perception. If not an England, there'll always be a Brains Trust: internees on the Isle of Man, we learn, started up an unofficial university, a kind of concentrating camp. After the initial scare, the gloomy prognostications of H. G. Wells, and the disappearance of Auden and Isherwood to America, the show went on. Some of it on the road – war-work in the provinces was encouraged by touring troupes of theatricals.

Jolly good show. Or was it? The real subject of *Under Siege* is not the democratic dissemination of culture to the sticks, but the reactions of the London literary mandarins to the war. At first, there was a certain amount of panic – I am therefore I funk. Some tried to circumvent the threat of conscription by joining Victor Cazalet's anti-aircraft battery at Rochester, where James Pope-Hennessy was librarian and chaps could potter round the barracks in their silk pyjamas. Cazalet's greenhouses ensured a supply of fresh flowers. Dylan Thomas, who candidly admitted that he wanted to put little into the war ('certainly not my one and only body'), volunteered for the battery, but his one and only was rejected on medical grounds.

Another scheme involved Lord Esher, who proposed that an informal committee, including Desmond MacCarthy and John Lehmann, should choose 50 writers and artists to be exempted from conscription. Since they would almost certainly have chosen duds, one learns with pleasure that the War Office vetoed the proposal. After this febrile activity, things settled down. Writers wishing to be part of the war effort were snubbed by the bureaucrats who (rightly, in my view) regarded them as peripheral to the struggle with Hitler. The alienated intellectuals then entered their third Cartesian stage – I am therefore I

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brood. However, this brooding, widespread though it was, hatched very little in the way of good art. Many intellectuals felt they were prevented from being great writers by circumstances beyond their control. To Cyril Connolly's pre-war list of the enemies of promise (booze, sex, domesticity, talk, journalism, worldly success) could now be added the war. War meant a shortage of paper and typewriters, conscripted printers, the sense of being dehumanised by the machine of state, lack of security, the absence of an individual or collective myth. Above all, it now seems, war meant excuses, excuses. The strength of Mr Hewison's book is that it recreates this ethos in depth; the weakness is that it never rumbles the bogusness. The obvious distinction between writers and intellectuals is not made – the distinction between *I am therefore I write* and *I am therefore I want to write*. Keith Douglas and Alun Lewis, the only war poets of stature, simply wrote, using the materials to hand. The intellectuals wrote about writing, ignoring Connolly's salient question in *The Unquiet Grave*: 'How many books did Renoir write on how to paint?'

Connolly is the spokesman of failure, shrewd enough, one guesses, to realise that his novel, *The Rock Pool*, was merely plausible – knowingly nasty, short on characterisation and convincing dialogue, long but uncertain on style. Naylor, the central character, is a heavily ironic self-portrait and a prediction of failure. Unfortunately, he is the *only* character. Connolly desperately wanted to be a great writer, but the prose style on which he relied almost exclusively was fickle. He could write with unnerving panache: Naylor is preparing a biography of Samuel Rogers –

> unconsciously he had chosen a man who, besides being easy to do, and rather coming into fashion, was also, by his snobbery, his great wealth, and a certain niggling smallness of soul, by no means unsympathetic.

Elsewhere, describing a girl dancing, he parenthetically swats 'the morbid redundancies of Ravel's *Bolero*'. Art, good or bad, stimulates him. On the other hand, nature and women (each of them alien to Connolly's mannered consciousness) defeat him entirely. A mouth 'like a crushed blackberry' is conferred on his dike anti-heroine, Toni van Kandersteg. Connolly's *métier* was the epigram: 'we all like obscurity when it is on our own plane: great artists like Epstein and Orpen know how to provide for the public the bewilderment it deserves.' Novels, though, are not made out of epigrams. 'The warm night, on which summer's hold could yet be imagined as faintly relaxing' is always there, alas.

The weakness of *Under Siege* appears most clearly in its treatment of Julian Maclaren-Ross – a tragic figure according to Robert Hewison. Dan Davin's *Closing Times* also remembers him, affectionately if ruefully, as a man who squandered his early brilliance. What brilliance? As a short-story writer, Maclaren-Ross tried to domesticate the vernacular style of Hemingway. Here is a sample:

> It was in a café and she was a WAAF. What was he writing was it poetry . . . You can tell yourself that the uniform does not matter that you are the same underneath but it does matter and you are not the same because the attitude of others makes you what you are and of course to a private soldier the attitude of others is entirely different and you yourself are different too.

After a page of this, the ventriloquist's dummy is ready to gabble – the legs go limp, the mouth drops like a drawbridge, and a burly arm reaches across the Atlantic and plunges violently up the shirt tails. The effect is less pronounced in his other stories, but essentially Maclaren-Ross wasn't more than a mimic. He picked up the inflections not of individuals but of classes. The title 'A Bit of A Smash in Madras', with its crude tang of colonialism, is itself a giveaway. His ear was glib rather than accurate. In his *Memoirs*, he recounts the difficulties of adapting *A Gun for Sale* for radio. How could sound convey Raven's crucial deformity? Graham Greene suggested a waitress saying, 'Ugh, he ain't arf an ugly bastard. That 'air (*sic*) lip of his makes me want to retch.' Maclaren-Ross, coarsening the coarse, amended this to 'fair turns me stomach up'. Jolly good show.

THE JAPANESE

Edwin O Reischauer

"Professor Reischauer provides an excellent summary. . . . But as someone who was born in Japan, who passed his formative years there, who has married a Japanese and who has served as American ambassador to the country, he is in a unique position to act as interpreter between this remarkable and bewildering people and ourselves." *Francis King, Sunday Telegraph*

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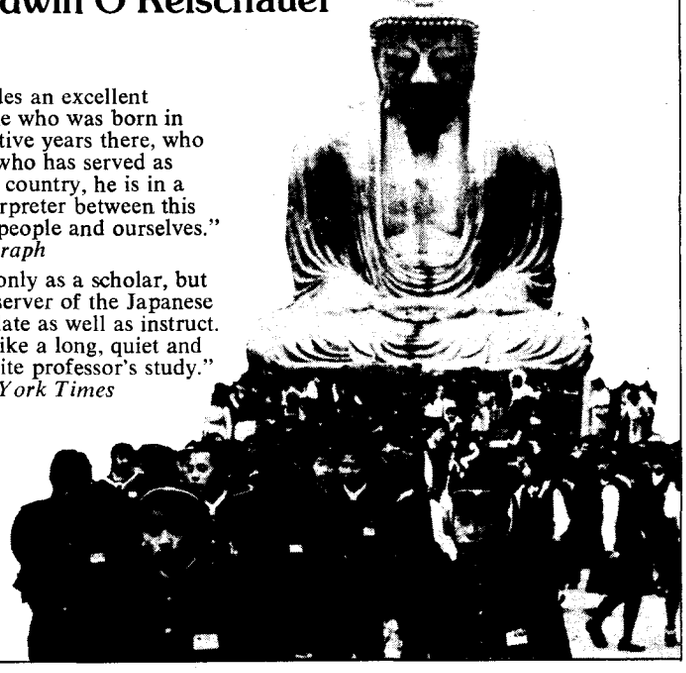
Belknap, June, **£9.75**



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Eric Sams

Camera Obscura

Nabokov: His Life In Part by ANDREW FIELD *Hamish Hamilton* £8.50

Andrew Field holds the Chair of Foundation Professor in the School of Humanities, no less, at Griffith University in Australia. With his free hand he writes about Nabokov (critique, bibliography) and Russian literature. He has also published a novel of literary life and pretensions. Oh. A novel. That's an attempt at the Field style, which takes some getting over. Even its pauses can be ironically pointed, like music; the meaning is not just between the lines but among the spaces. Even so, the book displays manifest strengths and gifts, such as linguistic flair, literary insight, originality of approach, deep personal involvement – all the qualities, in a word, that count as creative on the campus. But they may rank as tares, not wheat, in the biographical field. As the (presumably solicited) testimonial emblazoned on the jacket proclaims – 'When a biography is as inventive as this one, we may certainly call it a work of art.' Perhaps so; but may we as certainly call it a biography? In that context, 'inventive' might strike many authors and readers as a punishing and painful backhander. After only a few pages of this art-work I began to sigh for the old-fashioned craftsmanship of plain exposition by means of factual data deployed in coherent sequence.

We begin with a chapter of magazine-style interview, wherein we meet the master and his wife chatting in ostensibly relaxed ease to their talented and trusted young Boswell. But the old folk remain wary, sometimes tense. At one point Mrs Nabokov could restrain herself no longer. 'Andrew . . . what is your angle?' A good question; and the answer is too often oblique and tangential. The title is a fair warning. It is avowedly 'an admission and declaration of inconclusive evidence, of freedom from the fat of irrelevant fact . . .' But despite this disclaimer the proof of the padding is in the reading:

> Once I asked Véra Evseevna what she thought her life would have been like had the revolution not occurred, and she was only midway through the second sentence of her speculation when Vladimir Vladimiro-

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vitch lost patience and interrupted with forced gruff humour: 'You would have met me in Petersburg and we would have married and been living more or less as we are now!'

Field's gift for encapsulating very little in several carefully recorded words becomes even more marked in the following section, which is spent in looking through the yellowed leaves, or none, of the family tree. This investigation is well summarised, after another 30 pages, in the words: 'The most important things I know and wish to convey about the Nabokov family are the very things which are impossible to prove or even state with any precision.' Exactly; but not everyone will be quite so satisfied with the resulting vagueness of voice and tone, especially when it is accompanied by sweeping and rather empty gestures. 'The most formative and significant pattern that I have been able to trace to the present from the furthest known reaches of Nabokov family history' (come off it) is an 'undemonstrable factor', namely that the family tended to have happy childhoods.

This strain of self-indulgence is, it seems to me, a demonstrable factor in weakening what might otherwise have been a powerful work. The grasp of sources and data can become slack, e.g. in misrepresenting what Nabokov says in *Speak, Memory* about his return to Cambridge. There are unnoticed inconsistencies, sometimes within the same paragraph; thus the accounts of Nabokov as a student (p.138) and as a chess-player (p.155) are self-contradictory as well as *prima facie* implausible. There is little attempt at reasoned argument, and what there is lacks cogency. The paternal library contained psychological case-histories; Nabokov acquired a taste for such reading; this is a 'sufficient explanation' of the origins of his neurotic and psychotic characters. There are unspoken prejudices – 'Mirsky, whose politics were leftist but whose literary opinions are almost always scrupulously fair and exact . . .' Resonance takes precedence over relevance – 'Above the playing field there was a sea of windows with Mondrian-like paning on the outside perimeters on three sides of the trapezoidal court . . .' Finally, the conjunction of subjective content and idiosyncratic style almost suggests a biography of Andrew Field by V. Nabokov.

However, the perspective improves sharply once the actual subject is officially born, on p. 89, and embarks on his long odyssey from affluence in his native Russia via comparative poverty in Europe and increasing rewards in America to a *Lolita*-subsided lap of luxury in a Swiss hotel. A model round which to drape the biographical material affords a better view of its style and finish. It has durable quality too, in the fabric of first-hand commentary about formative places and people, and the astute relation of character and incident to particular novels. But if, as Nabokov himself is recorded as saying, the first biography casts a certain shadow on the others, then he seems likely to remain a shadowy figure for some time to come. No new light is thrown, so far as I can see, on the nature or the stature of his art, or the psychology of its creation; and these are surely the uncharted areas that many readers would wish to explore. Here is a mind passionately concerned with languages, lepidoptera, chess, cipher and crosswords. What is the significance of this Romantic obsession with defined and patterned images; what precisely is being seen, with what vision and insight? What is the quality of emotive and evaluative life and experience behind the Nabokovian art-work; how are language and thought modified by a life of wandering exile, with so many more routes than roots? This book is too busy being 'evocative and brilliant', as the blurb has it, to step back and survey Nabokov's life and personality in the depth they demand.

Matthew Coady

Star at Eve

Edith Evans: A Personal Memoir by JEAN BATTERS *Hart-Davis, MacGibbon* £4.50

For 25 years Jean Batters was at the beck and call of one of the greatest of our player queens, first as secretary, later as friend. She went to work for Dame Edith Evans as the actress, then 58, was preparing for her second attempt at Cleopatra; they parted 11 plays, and a great deal of anguish, later. Here is a portrait of the star at eve, long widowed, imperious yet shy, fretful about her age, unsure of her future ('Am I finished? does no one want me any more?') yet determined to prove she is a leading lady still. Not the material from which darling-you-were-wonderful theatrical memoirs are woven, but it provides an artless, sometimes touching, account of how it was when the make-up was removed and time closed in.

'Cherish her, Jean. Cherish her,' cried the West End entrepreneur Binkie Beaumont as he drifted from rehearsal. The loyal Batters appears to have done her best. At one stage she shouldered the housekeeping, the washing and ironing as well as the letters ('The result was that I bolstered my flagging energies by consuming about half a bottle of sherry each day'). It cannot have been easy. If these years brought their crop of successes and at least one glittering triumph – in Bridie's *Daphne Laureola* – the irritations, the difficulties, became harder to bear. Supporting players grew ever younger and less disciplined. Even success brought pinpricks. The long-running *Waters of the Moon* grew wearisome and the matinée tendency of provincial ladies to use her private loo en route to the dressing room of Sybil Thorndike assumed the proportions of an outrage. Her co-star, too, was a source of distress. 'Sybil would sit and wink at the audience while Edith was playing a scene,' insists Miss Batters. 'I saw her do it and was horrified.'

At one moment, reality seemed to be

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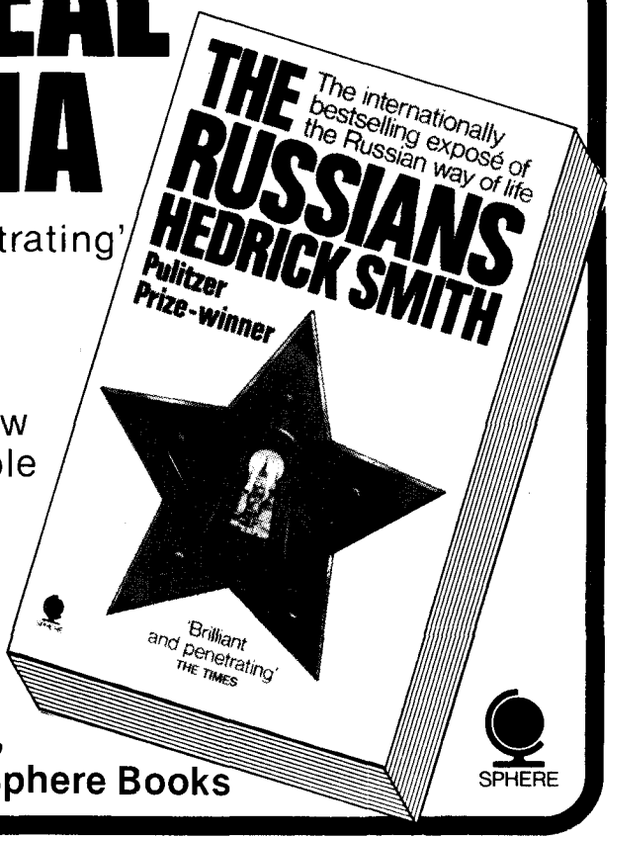

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imitating a brittle, witty Noël Coward lyric about the crumbling pillars of the theatrical establishment. At the next, it echoed some faded footlight novel. For all that, there was life in the old girl yet, as peerless movie performances were to prove. To the finish, she remained a player of extraordinary dedication, but she had to do it her way. In her prime, this was a strength. In her old age, it was a torment. When she abandoned André Roussin's *Nina*, in mid-tour, she was on the verge of hysteria. She went through with the 1964 revival of *Hay Fever*, but only after a slanging match with Coward.

As Jean Batters, who had suffered one breakdown, prepared to quit, Dame Edith, opening in *Dear Antoine*, was on the edge of collapse and, ultimately, a heart illness. It was a sad, muddled parting, the end of a no less muddled relationship. 'The doctor told me that I was doing her no good, that she took me too much for granted . . . I allowed myself to believe that I had outstayed my usefulness.' Half-fearful that she risked being tied to the Dame's 'chariot wheels' for the rest of her life, Jean Batters fled. Edith never forgave her. Nor has Miss Batters, now in her seventies, forgiven herself. There was not a day when she did not hope for a letter inviting a reconciliation. The Dame survived for a further five years, but that letter never came.

Valentine Cunningham

White Trash

A Loving Eye by JANICE ELLIOTT *Hodder & Stoughton* £4.25
Splendid Lives by PENELOPE GILLIATT *Secker & Warburg* £3.50
The Triplehip Cracksman by NICOLAS ADAM *Cape* £3.50

Novels about growing up in the provincial proletariat can be – as *A Loving Eye* is – wonderfully receptive grab-alls. The novel as dustbin-lorry, in fact. Into the eagerly mashing jaws they all go: anything and everything the novelist has known, debris and gobbets, fag-ends and cabbage-stumps in loving eye-fulls, memories of bread and scrape and pikelets, of chapel picnics and the scholarship exam, of first Park Drives and first copulation, of reading *Moby-Dick* in bed and *Pilgrim's Progress* on Sundays. And so irresistibly on, in this case, through the Thirties to the Left Book Club and Spain, Oxford and war. An over-rich mix, perhaps, a contingency too messy by far, a particularity too utterly particular; but then, happily, dustbin-lorries don't suffer indigestion, and they're always filled with what Janice Elliott's hero David recognises as the 'stink of life'.

The strain of making all this telling vividness coherent does, unsurprisingly, begin to tell a bit towards the end, and the narration resorts to some old tricks for getting across rocky passages. But generally Janice Elliott manages her people, grotesques and all, with delightful skill, commanding the necessary rhetorical shifts and switchbacks with amazing ease. In short, she *knows* – and without becoming coyly knowing. Knows for instance about young politics in the Thirties, so that her account of the Jarrow Crusade being welcomed in David's Derbyshire town stands up well against the moving enthusiasms of actual records of such arrivals. The hostile outburst from a drunken prole friend against David's other, slummingly leftist, bourgeois pals aptly locates, for him and us, one of the period's big tensions. David endures 'a dream of violence'; precisely Spender's phrase for Auden's *Orators*. It's as informed, all this, as the novel's inside story of the 'holy tricoteuses' of the chapel, and of David's mum's man, the un-frocked Methodist drinker, once an inveigher against Lucifer's bottle, convinced now his God has left him. 'I wonder', David muses to his journal, 'if writing things down doesn't make them seem true – even make them happen, like magic . . .' Indeed it does; at least Janice Elliott's writing does.

Short stories often bring out the worst in fiction. They're fussily particular about their little shavings of ivory, without having time to justify the fuss or the particularity; they're formal deadbeats, inertly keener to flop against the finishing tape than to busy themselves with making extended middles; they're too much besotted on the discreet charms of their bourgeois subjects. So gaggles of them can read like a cartoon of what's wrong with the traditional novel; they can make you blindly furious. And Penelope Gilliatt's latest gatherum has – like most – some of these failings. Her Bishop of Hurlingham with the burbling discourse and a fondness for sitters-down and quail pie, her little boy exiled with an accountant for tutor on his father's tax-refuge island, her noble family so feeling the pinch they're loading the shoe-cleaning on to their full-time clock-winding retainer, her frail chemist jollied along by his woman to get fit and fatter: they are not only a precious gang whose very existence seems too unconvincingly got-up. They're simply not about the place long enough to become important or interesting. Given more room, with the repetitive characters shunted together, quite a decent novel might rise from these jots: one in which radical oldsters would anguish over Rhodesia, a little child or two suffer between estranged parents, and idiots advise, 'Keep the mind busy and the body seated' (or, as it's also put in another story, 'Keep the brain occupied and the physique seated').

What these stories are not, though, is abruptly end-stopped. Alas, in general, their open-endedness isn't a defiance of the medium, it's only a function of their desultory inconsequence. Just occasionally, however, the unendings nicely mirror the unending grimness of the inconsequential lives of Penelope Gilliatt's rare, ordinary people – of the Popes, devoted home-based wedding caterers, or Willy, the obsessive do-it-yourself botcher from the Elephant and Castle. And instructively – as instructively as Bill, Lou and May make for the liveliest segment of Eliot's *Waste Land* – these proles help generate the best of Miss Gilliatt's tales.

As a mode of plotting the criminal life *The Triplehip Cracksman* is nothing much that's new. A couple of public-school crooks named, if you will, Teddy and Easter, trail across the capital cities after easy loot and stashes of smack; the lines cross and double-cross; the girl is lush, the car custom-built, the Hampstead quadraphonics something else. You've heard parts of it all before. You may even have picked up Teddy's snapped-out syntactics before: they fell, of course, off Raymond Chandler's flivver. They're so tensile tough, page after page, you could crack your teeth on them. Still, in them Chandler lives again, and that's bonus-time. Much less agreeably surviving hereabouts, though, is Ian Fleming. The brand-names drop in clever clunks. Noting every Koni shock-absorber, Emilio Pucci suiting, Jacques Fath tie or .454 Casull Magnum going by is also tiring for the reader. Poor Teddy can't even put sugar in the juice of lemons: they have to be 'crushed by Kenwood, sweetened by Tate and Lyle'. He's intellectually snooty too: Wittgenstein, Dillon's, J. G. Ballard, Oscar Peterson's Brown-Thigpen days, the *Southern Review* – he knows his way about them all. 'I'd be a structuralist,' he confides, 'if I was intelligent enough to make it pay.' Wise guy, he sticks to thuggery; it's more amusing. Funkier as well. 'It was short and hard and wet and good. I felt like three o'clock on an August afternoon in New York, and liked it.' Something like that goes for this novel.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Russell Davies

In Hospitality

Greybeards, veterans, oldsters, voices of experience: you've got to call them something, because the box is suddenly full of them. Old reporters. Men Alan Whicker might have called the pensionable pioneer phrase-makers of TV journalism. This week you could see them all. The living hell that was René Cutforth. The wind-lashed wastes of James Cameron. The life that men called Fyfe.

Much has been made of the return of Fyfe Robertson, 74. He has been photographed in morale-sapping close-up for the front of *Radio Times*. He has been interviewed on *Nationwide* (BBC-1), where his very survival caused one of that programme's now expected outbursts of juvenile clubbability and glee. 'Will *you* make 74, Bernard?' asked the current weightless smoothie-in-charge, addressing Bernard Falk. Falk, a 'fun' reporter in whom some intellectual centre of gravity is nevertheless occasionally discernible, could not think of anything suitably fatuous to reply. '*You* won't survive the rigours of the BBC Club tonight!' came somebody's saving rejoinder, and amid general ho-ho-hoing the programme faded to its end, having come close, once more, to putting the atmosphere of the after-hours hospitality room actually on the air.

It was elicited from Robertson, anyway, that he had done over 700 reports. In his *Tonight* days, he used to travel 1,000 miles a week, and had his tweed hats (made in Inverness) stolen at the rate of one every two months. He seems proudest of having invented the term 'phart', for phony art, and delighted in showing his interviewer how versatile the word is: you could make it into 'pharting', etc. The interviewer, pretending to be embarrassed but failing even in this, started calling Fyfe 'Mr Robertson' in a mock attempt to cool him down.

Now, I don't dislike Fyfe Robertson at all. I don't think anybody really has, since the era when his declamatory style of scene-setting was so insistently parodied on the radio by the Kenneth Horne people. ('Helloo. I'm standing in . . . *Ugh*', and so on.) But I was not very encouraged by this jocular reintroduction to his style, and not very surprised when the first of his *Robbie* reports (BBC-1) turned out to be extremely lightweight. Seeing Robertson full-length was a small bonus; he has very long legs and a gait that suggests he has two pairs of knees. But the programme itself was misshapen, dipping suddenly from politics into eccentricity. We had a superficially startling view of oil-rich Aberdeen, but then moved inland to a potty tourist festival called the International Gathering of the Clans. Oil and tourism, to be sure, are two polarised possibilities for the Scottish future; but simply to swing from the one to the other is to ignore the mass of Scottish lowland people who, on present evidence, are going to stay stuck in the worst industrial landscapes, with jobs to match. What Robertson ended up with was no more than a good-natured survey of the Clan and Tartan business. The fun was largely a matter of people's accents and styles of speech: the cowboy-hatted Arbuthnot from the southern States ('Ah kayam ovuh heyah ta meet mah *clayan*'), and the amazingly English-public-school Clan Chiefs ('I'm veregh *pride* to be a Clan Chief'). Robertson's ideal, it seems to me, is to record people saying things you would have thought only a comedy-writer could dream up. In this he is perennially successful. But the place for this talent is the early-evening spot. *Nationwide*, in fact, is the place where they need Robbie back.

Apart from the fact that some vindictive dentist is trying to stop him communicating with us at all, James Cameron seems in good health, and continues his campaign for undisputed status as the Muggeridge of the Left. He peddles a different doom, the doom of despondency, the collapse into Cainism of the brotherhood of man. But even the clucking and sighing links he contributed to *Stand Up and Be Counted* (BBC-2), a *Yesterday's Witness* collection of civil disobediences over the last 50 years, leaked Cameron's intense enjoyment of his role as ringmaster of the vicious circle of history. Or is that René Cutforth? (See below.) Cameron's programme as a whole wasn't a whole. What have the East End anti-Mosley riots in common with the exploit of three hilarious old Welsh Nationalist intellectuals in burning down a few RAF huts on the Lleyn peninsula? Well, they were both in the *Yesterday's Witness* files and you sort of took it from there, if you took it at all.

Talking of the Mugg of the Left, by the way, the Mugg of the Right (and Proper) is almost lost to view. What did he look like? Ned Sherrin tried to remind us during the debut of *A Rather Reassuring Programme* (ATV); but Lance Percival's vocal impression was a bit intermittent, and the whole item seemed to be half-admitting that its target was nowhere to be seen. Sherrin was on better critical ground with his stylistic crack at the 'just how' habit. 'Just how big is the threat posed by this?' he asked. 'Is it this big?' (*Gestures*) '*This* big?' What spoilt the programme, by virtually disqualifying Sherrin from passing critical comment on anything, was the memory of his recent BBC arts-and-controversy fiasco, *Terra Firma*. That programme really was a threat. It was THIS big.

René Cutforth continued the Age Takes a Bow theme with his *The Forties Revisited* (BBC-2). Cutforth, a traveller who contrives to look frostbitten wherever he goes, seems to have stayed put in London for this series, but has insisted for some reason on doing most of his links out of doors. He is – another lesson for *Nationwide* – the master of the untenable statement that you somehow don't object to, because you know that more character than analysis has gone into it. 'In the Forties the nation lost its heritage but found an identity' is a view in which the two latter terms could equally well be reversed, and probably ought to be; but it is as well not to argue – just to wait for Cutforth to relish the coming confrontations, like the complacent county matrons taking in evacuees and facing for the first time 'head lice and impetigo', a phrase which issued from the boiled-dry throat of Cutforth as though it settled not only this hash but the outcome of the second world war.

Trevor Philpott, a mere balding junior, concluded his drink series well, though on the lowest of low notes. The addicts who weren't on three bottles of vodka a day were on the bomb-site, drinking hair lacquer. 'These are the ones', advised Philpott, 'who admit that alcohol has won.' Nobody who saw this can have failed to ask him/herself (one in three alcoholics is a woman) whether alcohol has a chance of winning with him/her too. What the series generally needed was some personal thrust from Philpott. What does he feel about it? Has alcohol ever done him a mischief, or a favour? It was not enough just to look moved during cutaways, though Philpott looks moved better than most.

Radio

Eric Korn

Dreadlocks

Eating announcers, even Radio-1 announcers, is relatively uncommon; but Peter Redgrove is an unfashionable optimist, and his occult marathon *The God of Glass* (Radio 3, from Bristol; directed by Brian Miller) looks on the bright side of demonic possession. Here was Geoffrey Glass, played with fine sonorous conviction by Yemi Ajibade, who has turned his 18-year stretch in pokey for an undisclosed atrocity to good account, and acquired remarkable powers – such things come more naturally to coloured races, like rhythm – which are handy in quelling a nasty outbreak of murderous diabolism among West-Country teenage females. Breaking theological regulations by conversing with devils in stirring antiphon, Glass soon has one half the population following him and the Old Religion. Politicians and divines react with predictable insensitivity, rather grossly caricatured: 'I'm worried about the sin against the Holy Ghost.' 'You always were, Cedric.' The media go for goetia, an international con-

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ference is turned into a Maenads' gala ('the policeman's helmet has come off . . . it's rolled over here . . . IT'S FULL!'). Glass takes the Albert Hall to explain in cathartic, hypnotic detail his crime, the image of everyone's violence, and after another uproar the world is made whole. Through the new dawn shuffle contented rustics, greeting one another with cries of 'Blessed be'. Like all the genre, it ends with a Birth, but the heroine's baby is no rough beast, and no slouch either; after an immaculate Leboyer delivery it chuckles, 'I love you, mother', with its first breath.

I am aware that all this sounds like great nonsense, and so probably it was; but it kept the ear busy and entertained while the mind dodged the neo-obscurantist stuff about cellular wisdom and hind-brain consciousness and the heavy underlinings of the hundred-and-one symbolic things a poet can do with glass. Mr Redgrove is best at chthonic litanies and voodoo chants, occasionally shaky on facts, frequently woozy on theory. As a play for radio it was bold but not bold enough: radio listeners are not to be treated as blind theatre-goers, needing stage directions in Braille ('Quick, follow me. Here's the main switch . . . here goes'). Bill Wallis impersonated the Prime Minister, apparently one Harold Wilson. Where would Margaret Thatcher have been in all these bacchantic frenzies? 'No man can reach as deeply as a woman into the abyss of his being.'

A more important and damaging kind of stereotyping was on show in *Black and Blue*, Radio 4's investigation into black teenagers and 'Babylon' (*anglice* fuzz). 'There are three sides to every story: yours, mine, and the facts,' began Grenadian Alex Pascall, making a successful play for the decency vote, but less kindliness was needed in this buffered collision of imprecise but cumulatively convincing accusations with bland generalised denials. 'Policemen was never taught that you don't give information they should beat it out of you, so why do that? You know it's not correct.' 'I say with all confidence that the majority of police officers carry out their job **conscientiously,**' countered a spokeswoman. Then would she say that there wasn't any racialism at all? 'Oh no,' brightly, 'everyone has their own opinion.' Meetings between police and blacks had been spoiled by 'older persons with very firm views on certain subjects'. The facts are that 41 per cent of London arrests 'on suspicion' are of blacks; cop hatred is not confined to Rastamen with dreadlocks: 'If this can be happening here, what the hell is happening in Brixton?' was a middle-class comment. It was too late to mend matters by recruiting more black policemen, one of whom said: 'If we're fighting against crime what does it matter what method we use?' Another thought it quite funny that he'd been stopped, on a plain-clothes job, by comrades who asked, 'How come a black man like you got a big car like this?' Pascall sought a hopeful conclusion, going on the beat with a nice copper who talked amicably to the street-corner brothers and thought that was half the battle; but the real conclusion was dispiriting enough: 'It's getting worse because society is getting worse.'

Back to racial and sexual mythology with *Flaubert in Egypt* (Radio 3); Christopher Bidmead enjoyably undergoing Byronic ennui at velvet skies and dusky thighs. It was supposed to display the making of a great novelist; of course it did nothing of the sort, but Niletours Ltd must have had a rush of business next day.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

The Family Way

'Tis Pity She's a Whore and **The Lorenzaccio Story** *Other Place, Stratford*
Da *King's Head*

The overgrown broom-cupboard that calls itself the Other Place is rapidly becoming as exciting a theatre as our nation possesses, fresh proof, if such be needed, of the RSC's adaptability, versatility and enthusiasm for knocking the accumulated goo off our classics. The revival of Ford's *'Tis Pity* isn't another *Alchemist* or *Macbeth*, but it, too, is spare, speedy, lucid and direct, a credit to a cast that can scarcely be accustomed to giving its all to spectators sitting near enough to stretch out a leg and trip over the hammy or overblown. Those entrusted with suggesting that, in Ogden Nash's words, vice is nice but incest is best are Simon Rouse and Barbara Kellermann, respectively brother and sister, lover and mistress and (it sometimes seems) hero and heroine. Rouse's Giovanni is a very twitchy fellow, at times so helplessly so that each muscle and sinew appears to have an independent life of its own. His body seethes and bubbles, visibly out of kilter and out of joint, like the world around him. Miss Kellermann's Arabella is a little less distinctive, largely because she's playing someone not-too-inaccurately described by T. S. Eliot as 'pliant, vacillating and negative, a moral defective'; but her decision to emphasise youth and naïveté, a girlish inclination to squeak and bounce after fraternal greetings have been exchanged beneath the sheets, does something to redeem the character, or at least give it an identity. The taboo at the play's core is as plausibly and as feelingly flouted as one could have expected.

But the effect of thrusting this gory saga into modern costume is sometimes odd. It may be possible to credit the transmutation of the Jacobean pinhead, Bergetto, into a Wodehouse chump, especially when Tim Wylton plays the part so affectionately. It's a little hard to take a physician who, dressed like a BMA bigwig, thoughtfully taps his thin-rimmed specs, authoritatively enjoins his client to 'take mine advice', and then offers him a prescription for a poisoned dagger – to be plunged in, presumably, every four hours until the symptoms disappear. Ron Daniels, whose choice as director all this was, has at least hit on a contemporary substratum likely to be as appalled by incest as the Jacobeans and as vengeful when its pieties, loyalties and sexual ambitions are threatened. If we're to judge by the dark suits and red buttonholes, and in particular by Geoffrey Hutchings's impassive, implacable Vasques, the kind of henchman one can nowadays imagine chauffeuring corpses in concrete overcoats from abattoir to riverbed, we are deep in Mafia territory – flick-knives in the pocket, images of the Virgin on the sideboard, and all significant messages scribbled in blood. Clever, no doubt, and carried off with a certain bravado; but I am not at all sure that Mr Daniels's analogy adds enough to justify itself. It was, however, his scarcely less anachronistic handling of *The Lorenzaccio Story* that really bothered me.

This is Paul Thompson's reworking of the De Musset play, itself a mordant study of a 'revolutionary situation' that turns out to be nothing of the sort. The superficial similarities between Renaissance Florence and contemporary Britain are not easily missed: loss of prestige and sovereignty, a shaky currency and high unemployment, misgovernment in the citadel and disaffection outside. But Thompson and Daniels lose no opportunity to italicise the already loud-and-clear, for instance by inserting lapel-grabbing Brechtian songs into the narrative ('What does it matter if you're hanging off a cliff-edge? Enjoy the view!') and by dressing the cast in a strange concatenation of ancient and modern. There are smoking jackets and khaki blouses amid the Medici sleeves and collars, abrupt changes of period and pattern before a shirt reaches the arms or a pair of trousers the ankles. There's even a pair of football boots with elaborate Italian laces, fruit (no doubt) of Botticelli's working lunch at Gola headquarters. It's a well-meaning idea run amok, one that hardly helps simplify an already cluttered, disorderly play; but it did not distract me from what's really fascinating in both original and adaptation: the protagonist.

Lorenzaccio is that Byronic figure, the high-minded tyrannicide. But in order to kill the oppressive Duke Alessandro he has to get to know him, and to know him means to share his corrupter pleasures, antics that have corroded the assassin's pristine personality until it's scarcely less spotted than his target's. Considering the play was written in 1834, the psychology is surprisingly modern, closer to Sartre than to Shelley; and there's much else that's familiar about the character and his situation. Lorenzaccio suspects that the murder will achieve nothing, and he is perfectly right, since the soi-disant republicans are mostly too cowardly and incompetent to seize the revolutionary moment, and Medici smoothly replaces Medici. He goes ahead for no better reason than to ensure there's some consistency in his life: his conspiracy is 'the only thread from my heart to the heart I used to have'. It is a striking part, and strikingly played by Peter McEnery, who is, as he should be, two irreconcilable identities uneasily cohabiting. To look at, he might be some androgynous rock-star, sinuous and undulating in his silver-sheen vest wincing at the squares and heavies around him; somewhere beneath, a steely predator biding his time. He is simultaneously dissipated and disgusted by dissipation, which was very much the predicament of the Paris

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roué and Romantic moralist who created him – De Musset himself.

Which recently reincarnated father would you rather be obsessed by? John Mortimer's, Peter Nichols's, or Hugh Leonard's? If we're to believe *Da*, the last would be worst of all, a maddening amalgam of Dublin charm and pig-ignorance: a fey, sly old clown, embarrassingly servile to his stingy employers, over-anxious to propitiate his narrow-minded wife, unmaliciously determined to make his adopted son feel mean and ungrateful. Certainly, the Leonard-surrogate, Charlie, seems more stricken than the others. We see him cringing and withering as yet another visitor is regaled with his bastard origins, and, in manhood, trying and failing to shut out the garrulous old ghost who insists on haunting his thoughts and sharing his life. The play's structure is exceedingly neat, allowing Da to appear from nowhere and re-enact evocative memories while Charlie, back home for the funeral, relieves aeons of gathering hostility – 'there are no shallows to which you won't sink, are there?' It is well acted, notably by Eamon Kelly, Tony Doyle and Mike McCabe, and often funny. But it is a quality of pain that finally distinguishes it. More than with Mortimer, much more than with Nichols, one feels that Leonard's memoir is a cathartic, a necessary purging of exasperation, guilt, grief and, perhaps above all, love.

Films

John Coleman

Harrised

Orca (A) *ABC Shaftesbury Avenue*
Gulliver's Travels (U) *general release from 31 July*
Alice in Wonderland (X) *Warner West End*

There is nothing much to write about this week, so we might as well begin with Richard Harris. With his sparse locks variously combed and hued, his somehow borrowed look of anguish and permutations thereupon, the all-round sense he communicates of being a fellow who has joined a Loners' Club that would incorporate Brando and Burton and Robert Shaw, he is a film chap for several seasons, a stand-in for betters. Currently doing his Irish-and-bemused bit, he is the middle-aged man of the sea, quite waterlogged. Michael Anderson's *Orca* – and this is the first of three spin-offs from more meditated matter (Melville, Swift, Carroll) – uneasily navigates round a killer whale. 'This is, without challenge, the most powerful animal in the globe,' utters Charlotte Rampling, a lady marine scientist, to put it gently. Her voice-over is also there to purvey significant items of whale-lore: they, like dolphins, love and live a little more intensely than we do – for all our vaunted verbalising; they are monogamous, vengeful but not really, will wipe out a seashore village with a whip of a bloodied fin. This excessively silly movie, which does for Cetacea what the *Frankenstein* rubbish has done for prosthesis, would have us know that a bereaved whale (Harris, in one of the rakish woolly hats he favours, has ignorantly and aberrantly shot up his mate and the whale-child she bore) zones symbolically in on the assassin: to the death. And so it goes, down to a last, farcical encounter amid studio chunks of ice. I have to hand a press release from Greenpeace Ltd (47 Whitehall, London SW1A 2BZ – 01-839 2093), with whom whale-lovers should get in touch. They say, 'We do not believe that sensational nonsense such as this film will assist us in the task of raising public sympathy for the plight of whales.' Right on. But a small plea might be put in for the plight of people involved in things like *Orca*: their bank managers may well smile, but who's laughing?

Mr Harris is next discovered all washed up, after an intro so improbable I won't soil this typewriter ribbon with it. If shades of Melville fell over *Orca*, how to describe the evidence of Swift – surely whirling in his grave – so fatally betrayed in Peter Hunt's *Gulliver's Travels*? The hulk of Harris is given unusual bulk by being swarmed over by little animations. Once again, it is the Lilliputian stretch of those ironic, savage peregrinations that furnishes the misnomered tale. Without too great a heave of the imagination, one would anticipate interesting dealings between big and small: giant feet disturbing insects, at the very least.

What we get is substantially less than that – a mercifully subdued Harris (a smile, a hand tugging toy boats, a sub-Disney body) – and an attempt at more: a pallid moral. The really wretched drawings-in-motion never approach the Fleischer skill of the old *Gulliver* (1939). Since then, a couple of generations of kids have appeared and some of them may not know the difference. They may, one might say, take it as read. But a slower version of Swift I never want to see. There is a gag of a kind at the end, a huge scoop, that could profitably have set a house-style for the business. *Gullible's Travels*: no, today's children – and it's a rare 'U' that comes their way – deserve better.

The 'X' of the week, 'starring Playboy's Covergirl', is Bud Townsend's *Alice in Wonderland*, so genial and jokey that one wonders what happened to the 20 minutes missing from the version presently available. A very personable Alice (Kristine DeBell, the least plastic girl to lend herself to showing all in a long time – even her grin is fetching) emerges from a *Music Man*-crossed-with-Warhol background to fill a fairly enticing foreground. The trouble is one can't tell how *strong* the event originally was. It is not very good as it stands, which is somewhere in the area of masturbation-fantasy, but it is signally friendlier and more relaxed about making public a few forms of love-making than, say, *Last Tango*. Curtly, it spoofs – with intermittent success – musicals, sex, old movies, and itself. Henry King lives again at the NFT, and Michael (*Car-Wash*) Schultz's first movie, *Cooley High*, opens this Friday at The Other Cinema.

Art

John Spurling

Think Small

Rubens Drawings and Sketches *British Museum*
London and the Thames *Somerset House*

Otto Sperling thought Rubens was a show-off. Visiting the master in his studio, he found him at work on a painting, having Tacitus read out to him, dictating a letter and prepared to talk to his visitor all at the same time. For us Rubens may seem too prolific, versatile, large-scale and extrovert a painter and too happy, successful, rational and self-confident a man to be attractive. It is hard to love someone who has no need of it. We can sympathise with him briefly for being born in exile – his father having fled the Catholic persecution of Protestants in Flanders – but he was back in Antwerp and himself Catholic by the age of ten and court-painter to the Duke of Mantua by the age of 23. True, his first wife died after 17 years of marriage, but four years later he married the 16-year-old Hélène Fourment. He had children by both marriages, a great town-house in Antwerp and latterly a country estate; he was ennobled by Philip IV of Spain and knighted by Charles I of England (having negotiated peace between them), and on top of everything he was recognised, in the words of the English Ambassador to the Hague, as 'the master workman of the world'.

He did not consider himself less. Accepting the commission to decorate the ceiling of Inigo Jones's Banqueting House at Whitehall, he wrote:

> I confess that I am by natural instinct better fitted to execute very large works than small curiosities. Everyone according to his gifts; my talent is such that no undertaking, however vast or various, has surpassed my courage.

Can one imagine Shakespeare saying such a thing? It sounds more like Shaw. But we cannot even pity him, as we might Shaw, for misjudging himself. The Whitehall ceiling is there – the only Rubens work still *in situ*, its central panel weighing 2¼ tons – to prove his words. The diplomat may have failed, after 12 years to-ing and fro-ing between Holland, Germany, Spain, England and Flanders, to prevent the Thirty Years' War, but the painter's talent and his use of it were at least as Herculean as he claimed.

It is necessary to bear all this in mind when visiting the British Museum's quatercentenary exhibition of his sketches and drawings, since we are inevitably shown Rubens's variousness without his vastness. One can almost hear him complain, in the robust manner familiar from his letters, that he would not care to be judged by these 'small curiosities', few of which were intended to be more than a stage towards something else. Nevertheless he did believe in the small to the extent of co-

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operating enthusiastically with the Plantin press in the reproduction of his paintings. An assistant would usually make the preliminary copy of the painting and Rubens would bring it up to standard with grey and white body-colour or sometimes oils before passing it to the engraver or woodcutter. The result was not always an exact reproduction. This exhibition contains, for example, the two preparatory designs (the left and right halves) for the woodcut of *The Garden of Love*, that extraordinary anticipation of Watteau and the *fête champêtre*, of which there are three different painted versions in existence. The one at Waddesdon Manor has at its centre, behind the group of semi-recumbent, *après-midi* ladies with attendant cupids, a large rose tree concealing a grotto. In the preparatory designs, the ladies have been shifted over to the right half of the picture, while on the left half the tree has been removed entirely to reveal a discomposed group of lovers within the grotto caught out by trick jets of water. The final woodcut retains this feature, but the painting in the Prado loses it without replacing the rose tree.

Many of Rubens's most famous works are represented here in embryo: two oil sketches for the Whitehall ceiling, several for the various Lion Hunt paintings, enchanting drawings of both his wives and son Frans, and an early sketch of Hercules and Minerva violently repulsing Mars (who has one woman by the hair and tramples over the tangled bodies of several more), the starting-point for Rubens's great Peace and War paintings, illustrations as it were to his finally abortive efforts as a diplomat, but in themselves the grandest combinations of all his talents at full stretch: energy, organisation, colour, flesh and story-telling.

The late landscapes, from Rubens's period of retirement to his country estate, are represented here by a dozen or so sketches and drawings, including a study of brambles reminiscent of the foreground of *An Autumn Landscape* in the National Gallery; and there is a double-sided sheet of dancing peasants for the *Flemish Kermesse* in the Louvre with which Rubens seems to sum up and surpass a whole tradition of group paintings. In the end, stimulating, thorough and excellently catalogued as it is, this exhibition is simply not enough. Rubens was so much a painter, so much a maker of paintings through the very rapidity of his brush, that one must leave the British Museum and follow him to the National Gallery, Whitehall, Waddesdon and, if possible, Antwerp, where there is a Rubens Jubilee to rival our flag-waving one.

The *London and the Thames* exhibition is a good opportunity to view the newly-restored Fine Rooms of Somerset House: an entrance hall, staircase and two floors of elegant Georgian apartments originally built for the Royal Academy and two Learned Societies. A good deal of the exhibition is as dull as it sounds, but several paintings are worth visiting for their own sake. If we cannot, after all, see Turner permanently installed in these rooms, we can at least temporarily see his *Mortlake Terrace* (lent from Washington) in a golden light, rudely called 'curry' by the then critic of *John Bull*. Melbourne has sent Gainsborough's large, boldly painted *View at the Mouth of the Thames*, once exhibited by the painter on these very premises, and there is an impressive group of Whistlers. In the Great Room at the top, contrasting with the restored 18th-century painted ceiling of blue sky and white clouds and the late 20th-century blue sky visible through high semi-circular windows on all four sides, are nine smoky Monets from the early 1900s. Turner ought to be here.

Rock Music

Mark Kidel

Mr Fantasy

Steve Winwood: 'Steve Winwood' *Island ILPS 9494* £3.50

Back in 1964, when most British pop vocalists relied on pimpled schoolboy charm or strained imitations of black rhythm-and-blues, Stevie Winwood, the 15-year-old white Ray Charles from Birmingham, had us all gasping with astonishment: his interpretation of Brenda Holloway's soul classic *Every Little Bit Hurts* – the Spencer Davis Group's first successful single – suggested that there was almost as much soul in the Midlands as in Alabama. It was Spencer Davis's group, but when they first hit the metropolis and appeared at the Marquee, drawing large crowds that queued half way round the block, it was the fresh-faced teenage vocalist at the keyboards who drew all the applause; he could sing like a black man, without switching on a screech or affecting a snarl.

Gimme Some Loving took the band to the top of the charts, and set Winwood on the road to superstardom. Winwood reached the zenith of his powers in the early days of Traffic, a band he formed and rehearsed at his Berkshire cottage with Dave Mason, Chris Wood and Jim Capaldi. While the Who developed a form of musical drama reliant on the drum-bashing maximisation of decibels, the Pink Floyd probed the inner space opened up by the newly popularised hallucinogens, and Jimi Hendrix married the two genres, Traffic reflected the more gentle side of the psychedelic explosion, producing rock masterpieces like *Paper Sun*, *Mr Fantasy* and *Feeling Alright*, songs that struck a perfect balance in their equal appeal to the mind and body. Traffic had grown out of the Berkshire Downs: they represented an alternative to the pounding beat and frustration of the city streets. The flowing cross-weave of flute, guitar, vocals and keyboards owed something to jazz, but it also prepared the ground for a type of rock music that did not have to be identified with anger and rebellion. Rock could be soft without becoming spineless.

Winwood's magical singing had grown more confident, and his voice, with its full, clear tone, sounded a good deal more relaxed and natural than the sandpaper rasp of Joe Cocker and Rod Stewart or the defiant drawl of Mick Jagger. Steve Winwood became the vocal star of Blind Faith, the first, and perhaps only, supergroup. A rockbiz entrepreneur's dream, combining Britain's best singer with its top guitarist, Eric Clapton, Blind Faith was designed to produce millions of pounds for all those concerned; but the accountants and impresarios had ignored the potential strains of super-hype and pre-programmed fame: the band enjoyed a meteoric, and at times brilliant career, but soon broke up, with Clapton and Winwood, unwilling rock heroes, taking a conscious step out of the superstar spotlight.

Eight years later, after several uneven albums with re-formed versions of Traffic and modest cooperations with other musicians like Stomu Yamash'ta, Winwood has produced his first solo album. During the intervening years, he apparently found it very difficult to work, and had been unable to keep up with the music industry's usual appetite for a regular stream of star product. Winwood's record company, Island, has largely built its rock reputation on Traffic's success, and with Steve's brother Muff as one of the company's executives, they can't have exposed him to the usual commercial pressures. The longer the silence and inactivity, however, the more difficult a return to vinyl must have appeared, particularly in the form of a solo statement. This nervousness may account for the quiet modesty of the new album.

Surrounded by some of the very best session musicians in the world, Winwood has produced, on one level, a perfect album: all the notes are in the right place, and the arrangements (with Winwood himself multi-tracked on piano, organ, synthesisers, guitar and vocals) are clear and yet subtle, although the vocals are sadly mixed well below the level of the highly rhythmic bass, drums and percussion tracks – another symptom of nerves perhaps. The impressively simple architecture of sounds covers up an almost total lack of spontaneity – possibly attributable to the truncated way in which rock is now recorded, each instrument taped separately on to one of the 16 or 24 tracks available.

The new album sounds too much like Traffic, but without the risks – the musical brinkmanship and originality that gave the band distinction. The slow numbers, with Winwood's gospel-tinged vocals, laid over piano and organ chords, are strongly reminiscent of *Every Little Bit Hurts*, but never achieve quite the same intensity. In a business where fashion plays such an important part, Steve Winwood's music sounds anachronistic, rooted as it is in the early reactions to 'heavy' rock and much too gentle for the dour sentiments and staccato beat of juvenile delinquent rock. If you should happen to cringe, however, at the sound of the conquering punks and refuse to be bamboozled into the mood of the times, you may still feel that Steve Winwood is one of the best musicians British rock has ever produced; but make sure you ignore the advertising hype – he has not matured into a fine old master, for his best work was undoubtedly recorded with Traffic in the Sixties, and that has not faded one little bit.

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Weekend Competition

No 2474 Set by A. Boteman

There is a *Penguin Book of Socialist Verse*, but no equivalent anthology from which Tory, Liberal, anti-EEC, UUU, Scot-Nat and other candidates can pilfer a pithy phrase or two. Fill the gap, please, in up to 15 lines, by 12 August (oh, and do try to avoid being merely raucous about personalities).

Result of No 2471
Set by Wayne Sidesaddle

We asked you to imagine the Gruesome Hols you could be having this year.

Report by Len the Unlucky

Many of you (well, several actually) have been writing in to ask how I came by my sobriquet. The short answer is, by getting landed with judging comps like this. 'One for you, Len, I think,' reads the touchingly informal note from Mr Keats; and I know what to expect. A colossal entry of quite shameless mediocrity. Oh well: a quixotically generous eight quid to the newcomer Riddle; six to McGowan.

Dear Diary,
Tue Aug 1: S.S. *Stropolopoulous* sets sail from Tilbury. Captain Notalopoulos. Weather fine. Auntie in high spirits. Pork in vine leaves, apple crumble and custard.
Wed Aug 2: Deck quoits. Brief squally shower. Invited to Captain's table. Auntie in excellent spirits. Dancing to Eric Steggles and his Steggle-o-maniacs. Beef in ivy leaves, apple charlotte and custard.
Thu Aug 3: Weather holding. Auntie in cheerful spirits. Greek fancy dress party. Auntie and I go as colonels. Highly Commended! *Boeuf en feuilles quelconques*, baked apples in cider sauce.
Fri Aug 4: Auntie bearing up in spite of weather. Eric Steggles seriously ill after stabbing. What a surprise, Melvyn Bragg on board! Baked leaves *en croute*, apples *aux pommes*.
Sat Aug 5: Last quoit thrown overboard. Auntie desolated. Burial at sea of late Eric Steggles. Invited again to Captain's table. Captain sick. Custardy thing with meat in.
Sun Aug 6: Collision in night with Japanese supertanker *Honda Gioconda*. Take to boats. Auntie as well as can be expected. Biscuits.
Mon Aug 7: Picked up by S.S. *Durham Scrounger*, a commercial vessel. Vesta Beef Curry. Auntie haemorrhaging slightly. Melvyn Bragg still on board. Heat wave.

J. ARTHUR RIDDLE

Dear Viv, Having a lovely time, though we missed the first week as Luton was fog-bound. It passed fast, mind; we found a lovely lay-by near Biggleswade with friendly gipsies who showed Terry how he could drive without a spare wheel or headlamps. I got very brown – in patches, anyway, as we had a thrilling experience with a crop-spraying aircraft. Things got even nicer here. Our room is just one big open balcony, and there's been a week-long festival of road-drill operators down by the swimming pool, which will be lovely to judge by the amount of water that's collected in the hole already. Such colourful insects everywhere – the locals even put them in salads! Hope you're not too jealous. Love. Daphne.

MORAY MCGOWAN

Tony Miles

Chess

No 44 Korchnoy-Polugaevsky

The Korchnoy-Polugaevsky match seems to be turning into a rout. Korchnoy duly pressed home his advantage in the third game to take a 3-0 lead, which has not been seen since Fischer's assault on the championship. At this stage Polugaevsky followed time-honoured tradition and decided to become ill (a little late – I thought) claiming a postponement of the fourth game. He was later seen escaping from chess on the tennis court. Whatever was wrong with him, observed a press release drily, it wasn't tennis elbow.

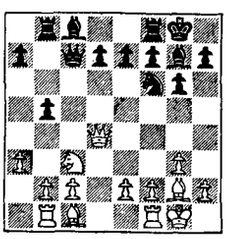
It also mentioned that the head of the Soviet delegation, Baturinsky, seemed none too pleased at the way things were going and had chosen to vent his anger upon the Russian seconds, Bagirov and Zaitsev. Not content with this he went on to lodge an official protest, no less, against Stean (one of Korchnoy's seconds) for "having chosen a table too close to theirs at lunch." Anyway, maybe the break helped a little since Polugaevsky managed to draw the fourth game.

The crucial second game:—
White: L. Polugaevsky Black: V. Korchnoy

1. P-Q4, N-KB3; 2. P-QB4, P-K3; 3. N-KB3, P-QN3; 4. P-KN3, B-N2; 5. B-N2, B-K2; 6. 0-0, 0-0; 7. N-B3, N-K5. Karpov has preferred 7 . . . P-Q4 recently. **8. Q-B2, N x N; 9. Q x N, P-KB4.** 9 . . . P-QB4 is usual here, popularised by Korchnoy. Doubtless he felt that the opposition camp had prepared against it. **10. P-N3, B-KB3; 11. B-N2, N-B3; 12. QR-Q1, N-K2; 13. N-K1, B x B; 14. N x B, P-KN4; 15. Q-B2, N-N3; 16. P-K4, P-B5; 17. P-K5.** Establishing a useful space advantage in the centre. **17 . . . B-N2; 18. Q-K4, Q-K2; 19. R-Q3.** Up to here white is slightly better, but he begins to drift a little. He should prepare P-Q5. Possibly 19. KR-K1 immediately is best. **19 . . . QR-Q1; 20. R-K1, P-Q4** confusing matters. **21. P x P ep, Q x P; 22. R(1)-Q1.** If 22. Q x P ch, Q x Q; 23. R x Q, N-K4; **22 . . . Q-K2; 23. N-K1, Q-B3; 24. R(1)-Q2, Q-B4; 25. Q x Q, P x Q.** Now black's K-side P mass is dangerous. **26. N-N2, P-N5; 27. N x P, N x N; 28. P x N, B-R3; 29. R-K2, B x P; 30. R-K6, KR-K1; 31. R-KB6.** White's position is very difficult, and, from the play, I suspect he was short of time. **31 . . . R-K8ch; 32. K-N2, R-KB1; 33. R x Rch, K x R; 34. P-Q5, B-Q3.** Threatening P-B5-B6ch. **35. B-B3, R-QB8; 36. B-Q2, R-B7; 37. P-QR4, P-B5; 38. P-R3, P-B6ch; 39. K-B1, P-KR4; 40. P x P, P x P; White resigns.** The threat of R-N7-N8 is decisive.

Problem 44

White to play. In this apparently innocent position I (black) offered a draw. While my opponent was considering it I noticed something which worried me. What?



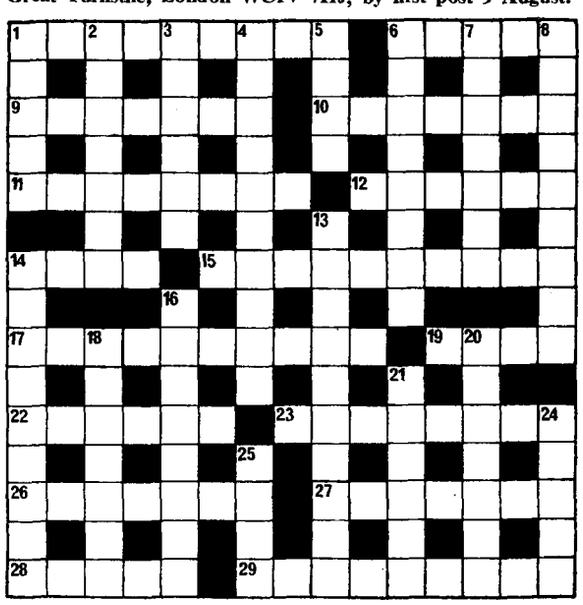
Entries to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than Wednesday 10 August.

Solution to Problem 42

Best try is 1. K-K1, P-Q7ch (if 1 . . . R-B7; 2. R-K6ch followed by R-K7 and P-R6); 2. K x R! P-Q8=Q; 3. R-K6ch! K-Q6!! 4. P-B8=Q, Q-Q7ch; 5. K-N1, Q-B8ch! 6. Q x Q Stalemate.

Weekend Crossword 1226

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1226, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 9 August.



ACROSS

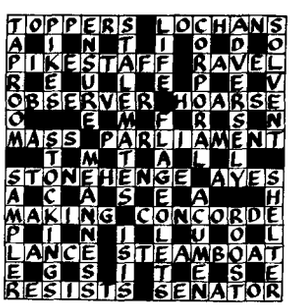
1. Provided with something to keep one warm before turning in with a roof over one's head (9).
6. Kind of English graduate without error (5).
9. Drunkard is a learner in one kind of ale (7).
10. The wrong pointer to what the body needs (7).
11. Animal which has sleeping place by the river (8).
12. Cancel an appointment with waves? (6).
14. Run for the line (4).
15. Saw nothing turned into capital (10).
17. Select caps may provide fine sights (10).
19. Indebted to being married with a ring (4).
22. Unseeing eyes (6).
23. Store ice when it is melted – this is not generally understood (8).
26. Get on in the world when training to win (7).
27. No clues needed to open up this one (7).
28. Agent for raising dough (5).
29. Firework makes heavens shake, and in France (9).

DOWN

1. Destined to sound celebrated (5).
2. Accounts for explosive noises (7).
3. Dwellings with large lavatories unstarted (6).
4. I search about after a woman, the leader of the unconventional (10).
5. Penniless, the gullible one would still have what was owing (4).
6. Poet with a place in the sun (8).
7. We go backwards in beginning so he often won (7).
8. Declared to be dangerous, although it might be mended after study (9).
13. Where small animals hide under the ground (10).
14. Entertainment extremely suited to exploration (9).
16. The resolute break the law in the first place (8).
18. Choose artist for play (7).
20. Wizard composer (7).
21. Plaster needed for reverse of general with slight wounds (6).
24. Temperatures in centigrade are misleading (5).
25. Animals which are the reverse of celebrated (4).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1224



Prizewinners to No 1224

Hugh Johnson (London SE21)
Mrs A. Jones (Walton/Thames)
G. W. Wendon (London NW3)

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Further details of position and application form may be obtained from **Clive Jenkins, General Secretary, ASTMS, 10/26a Jamestown Road, London NW1 7DT.**

The closing date for completed application forms is **Monday 19 September 1977.**

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE
invites applications for the post of
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IN ITS INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT

The person appointed will work with a staff of two and will be responsible to the Head of the Department for arranging study visits and lectures and for planning and executing occasional seminars for foreign visitors interested in British social welfare. He/she will be expected to have a considerable knowledge of social services in the United Kingdom, administrative ability and the capacity to work happily with people from a broad range of backgrounds.
Salary scale £4,136-£5,153 p.a., inclusive of London Weighting; starting point unlikely to exceed £4,451 p.a. Further details and application form from **The Administrator, NCSS, 26 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3HU. 01-636 4066.**
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THE UNICORN THEATRE for Young People is looking for a Membership Secretary to maintain all membership records & deal with all written & telephone enquiries about membership & member activities; also to assist the theatre's accountant with elementary book-keeping: experience not necessary but numeracy & willingness to learn essential. Apply in writing to: The Administrator, Unicorn Arts Theatre, Gt Newport St, WC2.

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Applications are invited for the position of Permanent Secretary of the Union, from those holding a professional qualification and/or a degree in Business Studies, Accountancy, or Law.

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The salary offered is within the Administrative Grade IA/II, £4,607-£6,655. Universities Superannuation Scheme.

Before submitting their applications, candidates should obtain further particulars from:

The Permanent Secretary, Students' Union, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, Essex CO4 3SQ. Telephone Colchester (206) 63211.

Applications should be despatched not later than 20 August 1977.

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For further information contact ALHE, 17 Victoria Park Square, Bethnal Green, LONDON E2 9PE. Tel: (01) 981 1221.

THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT

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to co-ordinate in particular its student and local group activities. Applicants should have relevant campaigning experience and be committed to the struggle for freedom in Southern Africa (typing and fund raising experience an advantage.
Salary £2,000 per annum.

Further details from The Executive Secretary, Anti-Apartheid Movement, 89 Charlotte St, London W1P 2DQ.
Tel: 01-580 5311.

A SOUTH LONDON AUTHOR/journalist on current Asian affairs requires full-time research/secretarial assistant. Arts graduate with languages preferred, non-graduates considered. Work includes typing, correspondence, newspaper cuttings, research. Congenial for someone who likes working alone, salary to £45 according to qualifications. Reply Box 8391.

TEA, A CHAT AND A JOB at the Winifred Johnson Office Staff Bureau, 118 New Bond Street, W1 (opp Fenwick's). 493 3005.

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Further information: write with details of curriculum vitae to CIIR Overseas Volunteers, 1 Cambridge Terrace, London NW1.

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Salary scale £2,200-£3,000. Application form—Miss Preece, 120 St Paul's Road, Birmingham 12. Interviews end of August.

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Six copies of applications, giving a curriculum vitae and the names of three referees, should be sent by Friday 19 August 1977 to the Registrar, University of York, Heslington, York YO1 5DD from whom further particulars may be obtained. Please quote reference number 10/8059.

Accom. Vacant

COUPLE required for 3 room, k. & b. flat, in co-ownership in Ladbroke Grove. Loan stock deposit £1,200. Rent £85 per month. Box 8405.

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Personal

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DECENT, intelligent fellow wishes to contact another, twenties, interested in music, books, travel. Box 8365.

ATTRACTIVE DIVORCEE, 5'5", 40s, house near Ascot, fond of the good things in life, fringe interests in the arts, archaeology, London, countryside, seeks intelligent, cultured, amusing, lively man. Box 8410.

MALE GRADUATE, 62, one-time family man now alone, sincere & dependable, independent but not rich, seeks slim, intelligent, woman companion, under 55, under 5'6", within 120 miles London but willing spend winter months Mediterranean. Box 8369.

PERSONABLE medical specialist, mid 40s, needs home and company for part of each week near West End. Might suit independent lady who enjoys the conversational male at arms length, but believes that long term human contact needs some emotional depth. He generally prefers the tall, interesting ones who dress well. Box 8413.

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MIDDLE-AGED, EQUABLE woman, seeks compatible companion free wkends/holidays. Ints varied; enjoys good food, scenery, music & interesting conversation. Box 8359.

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ACADEMIC LIBRARIAN (m., early 40s), wishes to meet lady 30/40, with int. in music, cinema, theatre. London area. Box 8398.

SINGLE MALE, 35, normal interests, seeks female friend, London area. Box 8382.

MALE GRADUATE would like to meet educated, healthy and vigorous lady about 55, preferably in M6/M5 area. Box 8383.

ASIAN JOURNALIST, 40, seeks tall, cultured female, 20-45, any nationality, to meet wkly. Middx/Herts. London. Box 8364.

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ATTENTION!

We have equal numbers of men and women, but as this journal has more male readers, we highlight four intelligent ladies.

Very attractive blue blooded academic, early 30's, slim. Equally at ease on the hunting field, or engaged in political and economic discussion. Emancipated — but Oh dear! — old traditions die hard. Lancs. Ref. 7415.

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